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COMMENT

THE CRITIC'S TASK

IT IS a commonplace that ours is an age of criticism more than of creation. Creative spirits exist and work their will, even in spite of the prevailing climate. But in many the impulse seems to have become chilled by self-consciousness. Some modern poems seem to exist not by their inner sufficiency but only in anticipation of the elaborate criticism for which they hope to provide a blackboard exercise. Sometimes the formidable structure of modern criticism seems to tower above the work that is its occasion, drawing the work's life into itself rather than subserving that life. When we have sat through such a magnificent performance, why go back to the poor simplicities of the author, who, we suspect, never knew the half of it?

A recent book by HELEN GARDNER, *The Business of Criticism* (Oxford University Press, 28s.), is welcome for the wise modesty with which the critic's function is examined. Time after time she states briefly and exactly the points which are fundamental. For instance: 'I feel little confidence in the judgments of any critic who does not make me feel, however minute his analysis, and however laborious his researches may have been, that his motive force has been enjoyment. We do not need to disguise our good fortune, as if to allow the world to see that the study of literature is enjoyable might diminish its intellectual respectability.'

One of Helen Gardner's most thought-provoking remarks is in comment on T.S.Eliot's dictum: 'The rudiment of criticism is the ability to choose a good poem and reject a bad poem; and its most severe test is of its ability to select a good *new* poem, to respond properly to a new situation.'

Not so, says our wise author. 'The rudiment of criticism,' she writes, adopting Eliot's natty phrase, 'is not so much the power to distinguish any good poem from any bad poem, as the power to respond to a good poem and to be able to elucidate its significance, beauty, and meaning in terms which are valid for other readers. . . . If the severest test of criticism is the ability to give good tips in the Parnassus stakes, to spot the winners, some of our greatest critics must be judged to have failed the test.' In other words: 'The capacity to ponder works of art, and to say something which enlarges our conception of their value, or gives them fresh relevance, is the rudiment of criticism as an art.'

She is fearful that an excessive concern with standards and ratings may be injurious to true appreciation. 'A mind which is concerned with being right, which is nervously anxious not to be taken in, which sits in judgment, and approaches works of passion and imagination with neatly formulated demands, is inhibited from the receptiveness and disinterestedness which are the conditions of aesthetic experience. The attempt to train young people in this kind of discrimination seems to me to be a folly, if not a crime.'

A corollary of this applies no less to the task of reviewing than to the task of literary criticism in the more formal and leisured sense. 'Spotting winners' is somewhat more the test of the reviewer, because he does offer himself as a guide to the latest thing. Yet in both tasks it remains true that the promotion of enjoyment is a more important task than the castigation of offenders. Doubtless there are times when nastiness and folly grow so rank that the weeds must be slashed down if the plants are to be given room. Both the reviewer and the critic may on occasions justifiably discharge this negative office, preserving only the saving humility of knowing that no one is infallible, and distinguishing between attack upon the work and attack upon the person.

Nevertheless the great task of criticism, and the most valuable part of reviewing, is the labour of love, not the labour of scorn and censure. To kindle appreciation of what is good is in the long run a better way to strengthen public discrimination than to scourge what seems bad. This does not imply a flabby complacency that levels down everything. Australian criticism and reviewing perhaps err too often both ways: too many censors determined that 'standards' must be unsparingly enforced; and too many vacant and indiscriminating yea-sayers to everything (well, nearly everything) written by Australians. Let us discriminate, but let us attend most to the cultivation of what is good, not being over-officious to speed the rest down its short path to oblivion. Concerning wisdom in this field the remark made by Quintilian, which Helen Gardner quotes, is worth remembering: 'For the very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline and the care of discipline is love.'

PHOTOGRAPH OF AN ACTRESS, c. 1860

Nan McDonald

Long schoolroom days, drowsy with chanting voices
And heat from the iron roof, and on the wall,
Flesh drought-devoured and eyes set on despair,
The explorers come to their last camp. Recall
That picture when you look on this, for there—
In the pack in the foreground? In the leader's rags?—
This small flat case lay hidden. When night came
He drew it out and kissed, late and alone,
Her young round throat, smooth cheek, and curled dark hair. . . .
Then, being mortal, may have known love's flame
Dying within him by the dying fire;
Merely to live became his heart's desire.

As for her, her heart broke, but was joined once more
And served her well enough in later years
(Her talent was too slight for tragedy)
Yet a flawed heart reflects a different light,
At times a double scene. So on nights long after
When the rain murmured like remembered tears
On the high theatre roof, she still might see
The desert sun strike downward, hot and white,
Blinding the gaslight, showing the crack in the gilt,
Moth-graze in plush, melting the paint she wore—
See players mime and mouth like phantoms then
Against the rock-hewn figures of doomed men.

No doubt the applause of London crowds was sweet
But it would have an undertone for ears
That had learnt first in Melbourne how the walls
May reel to wave on bursting wave of cheers

Bearing the rider on down the long street
(His eyes still seeking hers); how the sound falls
Away so soon, and faintly out of silence
Comes to the few who listen the northward tread
Of horses and of camels, then human feet
Stumbling in dust, and last the tiny whisper
Of running ants over dry sand, dry skin,
And in the sockets where those eyes had been.

She died of fever in New Orleans, still young,
Far indeed from the land of her Irish hero's sleeping.
How should her light foot print so harsh a ground,
Her smile find place in that grim tableau hung
On schoolroom walls? Yet it may be when sickness
Had burned her body gaunt as his, and dried
Her lips enough to take the poor kiss given
Her pictured face so long ago, she found
His camp at last, and there, too great for weeping,
Held to her breast the adder of that country,
Felt the fangs bite, the intricate knot untied,
Set her crown straight, and lay down at his side.

BIG JIM FARLEY

A MEMOIR AND A POSTSCRIPT

Peter Hastings

WHEN Coca-Cola's James A. Farley was in Sydney recently I was both pleased and intrigued to see him again. Pleased because I had pleasant memories of him in New York where I was corresponding for a group of Sydney newspapers for some years. Intrigued to see whether he had changed. He hadn't. Not a bit. Seeing him again brought back memories of those hectic days of the 1952 elections and the circumstances under which I met him.

It was a busy time, the elections were due in November and I can't remember a single foreign correspondent working in Washington or New York who wasn't committed to the Democratic cause. We were all 'madly for Adlai'. On the whole we didn't like Ike and we resisted his infectious grin. We distrusted his mangled syntax and the obscurity of his speeches. Besides we felt that politics was far too serious a business to entrust to generals.

Adlai dazzled us. He was witty, eloquent, precise. He seemed sincere, responsible and responsive. He had a devastating sense of humour, which proved fatal. '*Via ovicriptum dura est*,' he groaned, 'The way of the eggheads is hard,' and we were delighted. His was the American vision at its best, we thought, generous and broad. In fact all these agreeable characteristics comfortably blinded us to the fact that, apart from his brief term as Governor of Illinois, Mr Stevenson had little more practical political experience to offer than General Eisenhower. It was all sadly beside the point anyway. While we worked and wrote stories cautiously predicting a Democratic victory, the Republicans, with or without Ike, were already in; the long summer of the Democrats was ending.

Down at the Peace Palace on the East River few, if any, of the delegates thought so. They didn't like generals either—not in US politics anyway—and they feared that the foreign aid programmes would be trimmed in various directions and that their little applecarts would be upset. So they read and studied and talked and listened and the word was Adlai.

Some months before the elections were due I was casting around trying to find some experienced source of political sapience which would help conteract the effects of too much reading and violent partisanship. Somebody suggested I should go and see James A. Farley, Chairman of Coca-Cola Export Corporation. He was still a power in the land, a prominent businessman, who had been Chairman of the New York State National Democratic Committee and from 1933 to 1940 Postmaster General in two of Roosevelt's cabinets while at the same time holding down the all-powerful job of Chairman of the National Democratic Committee. Despite his obvious partisanship, I was told, there was no shrewder, more objective observer of the American political scene than Big Jim Farley, 'not excluding,' I was told, 'Harry S. Truman himself'.

Farley was very prominent in the New York scene. His photograph seemed to be in the papers every second day—top-hatted at some social wedding at St Patrick's Cathedral, gloved and groomed on the saluting dais at an Irish-American function or on St Patrick's Day, bald headed and smiling with guests at the Stork Club, the 21 Club or at El Morocco. He belonged to numerous clubs and organizations, was a member of committees on international co-operation and was the recipient of several Central and South American orders. He was also a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. He had the expected honours and position of his sixty-two years. All of this seemed rather promising. Obviously Farley was the man to see, a king maker and, if ever there was one, 'the man who . . .'. I wrote to him asking for an interview and received a prompt and courteous reply asking me to present myself at his office at the Coca-Cola Export Corporation in Madison Avenue the following Saturday morning.

The room in which he worked was large but scarcely more so than he. He sat in a huge chair behind a huge desk and seemed bigger than both. When he stood up he was about six feet four inches. He radiated energy, health and enthusiasm. His eyes were blue and friendly. As he pumped my hand up and down I felt, although a tall man, like a midget seeking a job from a particularly imposing ring-master.

We launched immediately into politics and I told him that I thought Adlai would win. 'Do you? Do you?' he shouted delightedly. I gave him my reasons—all of which were lamentably wrong—and told him casually that the same feeling seemed to prevail among the UN delegates and staffs. He was transported with joy over this and I wondered if he realized to what a frail

vessel he was entrusting his hopes. He asked what he might do for me. 'Nothing specific,' I answered, 'but I should like to avail myself from time to time of your considerable political experience. I'd like to compare notes with you.' He seemed pleased with the idea and thus we began a series of Saturday mornings which, with a few interruptions, continued right up to the eve of the disaster that neither of us had the political wit to foresee.

The Monday after our first meeting I got a letter from him confirming our conversation and enclosing a pamphlet entitled FARLEY ON MANNERS. It didn't seem to be directed at me, however, and the following Saturday I presented myself at 515 Madison Avenue and was ushered into his office and told to wait. I strolled around the room and looked at an enormous portrait of Franklin D. Roosevelt inscribed in his own handwriting to 'Big Jim Farley with my every good wish'. I had obviously come to the right place. Near to it was a large photograph of Winston Churchill, a wartime portrait, also hand inscribed to Farley with similar sentiments of good will and esteem. On the other wall was a large portrait of Lord Beaverbrook looking deceptively benign and cherubic and signed 'Max'. Everything in the office was big but nothing seemed bigger than its occupant's coat which was draped across the back of his empty chair. Black, and of good material, it would have fitted me as an overcoat. Just then Farley came in, twinkling and shrewd. I drew attention to the signed portraits and he told me of his association with Churchill and Beaverbrook for whom he entertained the liveliest admiration. He remained silent about Roosevelt and talked of other things in desultory fashion but suddenly plunged. 'He was one of the greatest and meanest men I ever knew,' he said. 'At times nothing was too petty for him to do. He never forgave and never forgot. I was his Postmaster General in two cabinets. I know. He solemnly promised me he wouldn't run for a third term. He broke his promise. He lied to me! He lied to me! So I broke with him.' I had heard of his break with Roosevelt and could imagine the clash between two immense personalities. His secretary came in. 'Mr Baruch on the phone,' she said. I made to leave the room. 'Stay where you are,' said Farley and the telephone receiver disappeared into his huge maw. Their conversation was about the forthcoming elections and, of course, Governor Stevenson. Obviously neither of them was more than lukewarm about the Democratic nominee and I wondered just how much support he had among the hardheads of the Party.

'I think he ought to soft pedal this civil rights issue,' bellowed Farley. 'No, no, I said he ought to go slow on this CIVIL RIGHTS stuff of his. CIVIL RIGHTS. Sure, that's right. You can't rush the southern states, you know that. What's that? Yeah, that's what I said. It's a matter of education not legislation. What's that? No, I said it's a matter of EDUCATION NOT LEGISLATION. . . . Of course I think it's going to be OK. I'm sure of it. Is that your feeling? You know the UN people here . . . the UN people are tipping Stevenson and that's a good sign. They haven't got rocks in their heads. I said it's a GOOD SIGN . . . yeah . . . sure. OK Bernie. Goodbye.' Farley turned towards me. 'Bernie Baruch,' he said unnecessarily. 'What we need is Harry to give 'em hell instead of all this talk about civil rights.' He looked out the window. 'Doesn't hear so good,' he said inconsequentially. On Monday I got another brief letter from him starting, like the one before, 'Dear Friend Hastings', and enclosing another pamphlet—FARLEY ON CIVILIZATION.

I did not see him for several weeks, in the course of which the likely outcome of the elections had become no clearer to me. I still backed Stevenson. I still didn't like Ike. I went into his office and found him sitting in his shirt sleeves and talking into the phone. An enormous hand covered the speaker set. 'Max,' he whispered confidentially. 'Look,' he said into the phone, 'stop being a gloomball. I know I'm right. In fact I'm a darned sight happier about the outcome of this election than I was about Harry Truman winning in 1948. Much happier. Say, you have met Governor Stevenson? He's got everything. He's got the common touch and he appeals to the eggheads . . . what's that?' He went on nodding vigorously into the phone. 'Look I don't think the people of this country will throw away twenty years of social and economic progress for any five-star general. Not even Ike. Harry Truman told me he was more than confident after his tour of the West Coast so you can quit giving a bum steer in your newspapers . . . sure, sure . . . what's more,' he broke in energetically, 'the UN people here are quite convinced that the Democrats will win.' He signed off and looked at me happily. 'That was Lord Beaverbrook ringing me from Jamaica. You heard me tell him we were going to win. Is the feeling down at the UN the same?'

This posed a neat problem. Feeling so far as I could gather was the same but it wasn't worth two straws one way or the other. It was merely an indication and one which I suspected more and more. Fortunately the question remained unanswered for his secretary came in. 'There's a lady to see you,' she said, 'a Mrs

Riordan from Dublin.' Farley scratched his bald pate. 'I don't want to see her,' he answered. 'Tell her I'm busy. You know what to say. Go tell her.' His secretary continued. 'She says she has a personal letter of introduction from the President of Eire.' Farley sprang energetically to his feet, reaching for his coat. 'That's different,' he said. 'Why didn't you say so. We're starting a bottling works in Ireland.' He glanced at me. 'You stay here, I'll be right back.' In ten minutes he returned looking very put out. 'Know what that woman had?' he snorted contemptuously, 'one of those illuminated scrolls saying she's a citizen of good repute signed by President Costello. He signs dozens a week. All she wanted was a job.' He gazed moodily out the window. 'Some of them will come at anything,' he said wonderingly.

The following Saturday for the first time he launched into his hopes and fears for America and described what he believed to be its proper role in the world. The vision he had was Pax Americana and it was shrewd, broad and generous and had about it none of the resentment of unrequited love which characterized so much of the American big businessman's conception of America in world affairs. Beneath the Irish corn and Tammany ambitiousness in Farley there was high intelligence and an unsuspected order of political morality. He asked me casually if I had read in the morning paper Dulles's attack on Democratic foreign policy and if I had, what I thought of it? I told him that I thought it particularly malicious and gratuitous coming from a man who had been President Truman's special Ambassador in Korea and elsewhere and who had shaped to no small degree the very policy he was now attacking in the mean hopes of political preferment under Ike. I said all this and Farley nodded energetic agreement.

'You see that typewriter over there?' he asked, pointing to a noiseless model on a side desk. 'Well just go over there and type out what you've just said about Dulles. Don't argue. Just go and do it.' Diffidently I did as I was told. After I had typed it I read it through and typed another sharper version and handed it to Big Jim. He read it through rapidly, pencilled in an alteration and reached for the phone. 'UP?' he asked and waited. 'UP? Good. I want Dick Smith. . . . Is that you Dick? Farley here. I'm fine thanks . . . look, ask me what I thought of Dulles's attack on Democratic foreign policy this morning?' Through the phone I heard a tired voice ask, 'I'll bite. What did you think of Dulles's attack on Democratic foreign policy this morning?' Farley settled himself back and read the statement, had it read back to him and then said, 'Now you've got

a scoop. Get it on the wires right away. . . .’ He put the phone down and turning to me he said, ‘Now, friend Hastings, I’ve made you famous. That will be in the *New York Times* tomorrow morning.’

It was, too. I got the first edition of the Sunday issue of the *Times* that night at about half past eight. I couldn’t find the item anywhere in its hundred-odd broadsheet pages and had just about given up looking when I saw it slap bang in the middle of the front page; a small box, like an island in an ocean of type, headed FARLEY SLATES DULLES. I wondered what the editors of the august *Times*, with their insistence on the integrity of news sources, would say if they knew an attack on Dulles had been written by a foreign journalist. The situation was slightly mad.

It got madder as the elections came nearer and Farley and I exchanged encouraging observations and information about Stevenson’s chances. Farley even wrote Stevenson a charming letter asking him to grant me an interview but the Governor didn’t trust foreign correspondents and wouldn’t play. Then came Ike’s bombshell promise to end the Korean war. Farley was furious. ‘That’s a Roosevelt trick,’ he said. ‘He’s played this one pretty damn dirty if you ask me.’

Nobody did ask him and with a roar the elections were upon us. I spent election night at Democratic Party Headquarters at the Vanderbilt Hotel with depressed Democratic aides. We watched the polls on TV and state by state it was Ike in a landslide. Later we watched him, his grin triumphant and his arms held aloft before the hoarsely cheering, slightly drunken crowds who had come to share his victory. We also watched Adlai in Chicago, his face twitching, near to tears as he conceded defeat: ‘I’m reminded of the story of Lincoln. “I’m too old to cry and it hurts too much to laugh.”’ Good old Adlai. I went off for a week and forgot about politics. On my return it occurred to me to ring Farley and thank him for his advice and help and to commiserate him on our mutual defeat. He was away. No, they didn’t know when he would be back. Would I leave a message? A month later I rang again. Mr Farley was busy but would ring me after lunch, if he could.

A year later at an Australian-American Association luncheon for Harold Holt a latecomer slipped through the door and sat at a table near to mine. After lunch was over I saw that it was Farley and as he edged past my table towards the official dais I said casually, ‘We’re not very good at crystal ball gazing are we, Mr Farley?’ He turned and looked at me from his enormous

height. His blue eyes were ice cold but contained no rancour. 'You're damn right,' he said shortly and strode off.

I met him again, several times, in Sydney a month or so ago. He looks a little older now, but not much, while still radiating the same energy, enthusiasm and lively interest in politics. I recalled our misplaced enthusiasm about Adlai Stevenson. He dismissed it with a wry grin. 'The man I'm looking to, of course, is Senator Jack Kennedy,' he said. 'I think he's got a chance of the Democratic nomination and maybe even a chance of the Presidency itself. He's young, intelligent and hardworking. In fact I remember I got into hot water with his father who accused me of saying that he looked too young on TV. I didn't say that. What I said was that I thought that many people might not vote for him because *they* thought he looked too young on TV. You can't be too careful about what you say.'

I told him that I didn't agree with him that Kennedy's chances were good for the Presidency. For the nomination, yes, but not the Presidency. Mr Farley disagreed gently. 'I'm a Catholic, as you know,' he said, 'but I think things have changed back home in the States. Not entirely of course, but definitely changed. There isn't anywhere near the same sectarian feeling as there was when Al Smith was running. You can sense a greater degree of responsibility. In fact I think that there is a feeling among some Catholic leaders that they would rather Kennedy didn't get the nomination than get it and stir up anti-Catholic feeling. I think that Kennedy could even carry the South which would not have been possible once. And you must remember this that there isn't such a lot of material for the Democrats—or the Republicans for that matter—to choose from. If President Eisenhower were to run again I've no doubt that he would win. But I'm not so sure about Mr Nixon. He's running well at the moment but people have long memories and despite his excellent performance in Moscow and at other times I have my doubts that he would win the Presidential election even if he won the nomination. That's my feeling about it. I hope Senator Kennedy wins the nomination and the election. If I'm asked I'll go out and campaign for him.'

Among Mr Farley's other observations:

President Eisenhower. 'Mr Eisenhower is a very sincere and honest man. I think he is a man of convictions but I doubt whether he will go down in history as one of our greatest presidents. I think that he has had a soldier's approach, direct and simple, and I doubt that he has had the ability to steer the

United States through all the problems we have faced and now face. You can see that in his attitude to Red China and on the matter of recognition. He finds the whole idea of recognizing Red China morally repugnant, I'm sure of that. Whether he has always been rightly advised in the past by Mr Dulles is a question for debate.'

President Truman. 'There were flashes of greatness about Harry S. Truman. He has profound moral courage and convictions together with a capacity for making big decisions. Take his decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima, his note to Russia over Iran, his Korean War decision. These were big things and he didn't hesitate for a moment. Sometimes in big things he made mistakes. In my opinion he made a mistake over General MacArthur. Not in getting rid of him if MacArthur wouldn't do as he was told by his Commander-in-Chief but in his method of dismissing him. He should have recalled him to the United States and talked it over with him, but it was bad the way it was done. MacArthur heard that he had been relieved of his Command on the radio news before he got official notification from the President. Nevertheless Mr Truman was a most capable President.'

President Roosevelt. 'Our greatest President if you take him all in all. Did you know that not a single piece of legislation, social legislation, passed during his terms of office has ever been subsequently repealed? But he had his limitations. I don't think he fully realized the score on the Soviet. It's not generally known how sick he was during the war. I remember just about the last time I saw him, maybe in 1942 or 1943, he asked me to have breakfast with him in the White House. One of the features of the White House is the large white coffee cups they used.

'Anyway I was sitting there having breakfast with him—he used to call me Jim and I used to call him Boss, a sort of respectful familiarity—when I noticed that he had to use two hands to lift his cup and they were both shaking so much he spilt the coffee into his saucer. Well now if you are sick and growing sicker your judgment is bound to be impaired and that's what I think happened to some extent with Mr Roosevelt.'

Sir Winston Churchill. 'I remember going to see him at Chartwell after the war. He was very nice and autographed a copy of *My Early Days* for my son, Jimmy, when he heard that Jimmy was having trouble with his College exams. I remember that he was painting, writing his memoirs, building brick walls, seeing scads of visitors and attending to his other interests. I asked


him—in sheer admiration—if there was anything else he found time to do. “Oh yes,” he replied, “I find ample time to keep those bastards in the Government on their toes.” I think he was really the greatest statesman of our times. He had tremendous energy, intelligence and insight. He was quite right about the Russians and clearly foresaw what was going to happen in Europe. He told me that when the US Government wouldn’t agree to driving onto Berlin and taking it before the Russians he actually asked us if we would approve of him ordering British troops, independent of the US Army, to forge ahead into Berlin. In this way he thought Britain could take the rap for an act which could only benefit both of us in the long run. But you see we had a curious situation in the States. Roosevelt had died having told Mr Truman practically nothing about what was going on. When Mr Truman called for a copy of the provisions of the Yalta Agreement they found it wasn’t even in the State Department files but over at the White House. That shows you what things were like.’

Peter Hastings

BUT THAT WAS LONG BEFORE

R.H.Morrison

But that was long before when Orpheus played
 And golden hands on golden strings made golden tones
 Where the assembly sat the log fire glowed
 And all who listened heard her name only her name
 Till in the luminous dark the shadows changed
 The dewy light became the song the fire the gold
 The shape of Orpheus faded from his robes
 And while the lyre played on the player slipped away
 But that was long before the song went out
 The fire went out her name went out dew became dank
 The embers ash the hall became a hall
 And all the luminous powers that straining we call down
 Can barely light the hearth where Orpheus sang
 And row on row of gold-lit mourners heard him mourn



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KARL MARX ON THE LAW OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

A TEXT AND COMMENTARY

Alice Tay Erh Soon and Eugene Kamenka

I

THE DIVORCE BILL

[An Article by Karl Marx¹]

C OLOGNE, Dec. 18 [1842]. The *Rheinische Zeitung* has taken a *totally isolated* stand on the *Divorce Bill*, but no one has yet shown it in what way this stand is untenable. The *Rheinische Zeitung* supports the Bill in so far as it considers Prussian matrimonial legislation hitherto to be inconsonant with morality, the innumerable quantity and the frivolity of the grounds for divorce to be inadmissible, and the current procedure to be unsuited to the dignity of the cause, a point, incidentally, which applies to all Old Prussian court proceedings. On the other hand, the *Rheinische Zeitung* urges the following main objections to the Bill: (1) that instead of *reform* there has been mere *revision*, so that the Prussian Law remains the fundamental law, producing a piecemeal effect and creating uncertainty; (2) that the Legislature has treated marriage as a *religious* institution, a *church* institution, instead of treating it as a *moral* one, and has missed the *secular* nature of marriage; (3) that the procedure is imperfect and brings together, externally, contradictory elements; (4) that on the one hand there are police-like severities in conflict with the concept of marriage, and on the other, excessive concessions to so-called equitable grounds; (5) that the whole wording of the Bill lacks logical connexion, precision, clarity and guiding principles.

In so far as the opponents of the Bill denounce these shortcomings, we agree with them, but we cannot possibly accept their unconditional apology for the previous system. We repeat a statement we have uttered before: 'If legislation cannot enact public morality, still less can it accept immorality as law.' If we ask on what *these* opponents (who do not oppose the religious treatment and the other shortcomings indicated) rest their reasoning, we are met with constant talk of the unhappiness

¹ The article appeared anonymously in German on 19 December, 1842, in No. 353 of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, of which the twenty-four year old Marx was then editor.

of the marriage partners, bound against their will. These opponents adopt a eudaemonistic standpoint, they think only of the two individuals, they forget the *family*, they forget that almost every dissolution of a marriage is the dissolution of a family, and that even from a purely legal standpoint the children and their expectations cannot be made dependent on caprice and its whims. If marriage were not the basis of the family, it would no more be the object of legislation than friendship is, for instance. The opponents, therefore, consider *only* the individual will, or rather, the *capricious will*, of the marriage partner; they do not consider the *will of the marriage*, the moral substance of this relationship. The legislator, however, has to regard himself as a scientist. He does not *make* laws, he does not invent them, he only formulates them, he expresses as conscious positive laws the inner laws of intellectual and spiritual (*geistiger*) relationships. Just as the legislator is accused of gross capriciousness the moment he replaces the essential nature of the matter with his own whims and fancies, so the legislator has a corresponding right to regard it as gross capriciousness when private persons seek to uphold their caprices against the essential nature of the matter. No one is forced to contract a marriage; but everyone must be forced, the moment he contracts a marriage, to resolve upon obedience to the laws of marriage. A person who contracts a marriage no more *makes* or *invents* marriage than a swimmer invents nature and the laws of water and of gravity. Marriage, therefore, cannot adapt itself to his caprice, but his caprice must adapt itself to marriage. The person who arbitrarily breaks a marriage maintains: *Caprice, lawlessness, is the law of marriage*, for no rational person would have the presumption to regard his actions as privileged actions, as actions permissible for *him only*. On the contrary, he will claim that they are lawful actions, *permissible to everyone*. What then are you opposing? You oppose capricious legislation, but you cannot seek to make caprice into law in the very moment that you accuse the legislator of capriciousness.

Hegel says that *in itself*, according to its concept, marriage is indissoluble, but *only in itself*, i.e., only according to its concept. This lays down nothing *peculiar* to marriage. All moral relationships are indissoluble *according to their concept* as one can easily convince one's self by presupposing their *truth*. A *true* state, a *true* marriage, a *true* friendship, are indissoluble. But no state, no marriage, no friendship corresponds completely to its concept, and just like actual friendship—even in the family, just like the actual state in world history, so the actual marriage in the

state is *dissoluble*. No moral *existent* corresponds to its *essence*, or at least, *needs* to correspond to its essence. Just as in nature dissolution and death appear spontaneously when an existence no longer corresponds fully to its definition, just as world history decides whether a state has departed so far from the idea of the state that it no longer deserves to exist, so the state decides under what conditions an *existing* marriage has ceased to be a marriage. The dissolution of a marriage is nothing but the declaration: This marriage is a *dead* marriage, whose existence is only a snare and a delusion. It is self-evident, of course, that neither the capricious will of the legislator nor the capricious will of a private person, but only the *essence of the matter*, can decide whether a marriage is dead or not, for it is well-known that a declaration of death depends on the facts of the case and not on the *wishes* of the parties concerned. But if in the case of *physical* death you demand precise and unmistakable proofs, must not a legislator lay down a *moral death* only after the most incontestable symptoms, since the conservation of moral relationships is not only his right, but also his *duty*, the duty of his self-preservation!

The *guarantee* that the *conditions* under which the *existence* of a moral relationship no longer corresponds with its *essence* will be laid down truly, in accordance with the state of knowledge and of universal opinion, without preconceptions, can be found only when law is the conscious expression of the will of the people, created with it and through it. As far as making divorce easier or more difficult is concerned, we will say only one more word: Do you regard a natural organism as sound, healthy, correctly organized if every external knock, every injury, destroys it? Would you not consider yourself slighted if it were assumed as an axiom that your friendship could not withstand the slightest happening, and would *necessarily* dissolve before every worry? In respect to marriage, however, the legislator can only determine when a marriage *may* be dissolved, i.e., when according to its essence it already has been dissolved. The judicial dissolution can only be a formal recording of the inner dissolution. The standpoint of the legislator is the standpoint of necessity. The legislator thus *honours* marriage, recognizes its deep moral essence, when he considers it powerful enough to withstand many collisions without suffering internal damage. Yielding to the wishes of individuals would be intransigence toward the essence of individuals, toward their moral rationality as expressed in moral relationships.

Finally, we can say it is precipitate to accuse the States with

strict notions of divorce, to which the Rhineland is *proud* to belong, of *hypocrisy*. Only someone who cannot see beyond the moral degeneration surrounding him could dare such accusations, which are regarded as laughable in the Rhine Province, and taken at most as proof that the very *conception* of moral relationships is being lost and that every moral fact can be treated as a lie and a *myth*. Such is the direct consequence of laws not dictated by respect for man, a mistake which is not erased by passing from material contempt to intellectual contempt and putting a demand for thoughtless obedience to super-moral and supernatural authority in place of the demand for conscious submission to natural moral powers.

II

CRITICAL COMMENTS

In his article Karl Marx lays down three plain, if somewhat startling, propositions:

- (1) That the 'true' law that should govern any human activity can be *discovered* by rational elucidation of the rules implied in the essential nature of the activity.
- (2) That the essential nature of marriage implies its indissolubility; but that some human relationships have *in fact* ceased to be marriages and may therefore be declared to have dissolved themselves.
- (3) That the guarantee that rational law will be truly determined lies in making law the 'conscious expression of the will of the people'.

When Marx propounded these views in this form he was not yet twenty-five years old. A year had passed since his graduation from University, one month since he had entered upon his first paid employment as editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. He was engaged to, and deeply in love with, Jenny von Westphalen, but they were not to be married till six months later, on 19 June, 1843. The intellectual quest that was to make him a socialist by the beginning of 1844 and a historical materialist eighteen months after that, had only just begun. In the University of Bonn, where he studied jurisprudence from October 1835, he had spent most of his time savouring the new-found freedoms of student life. In the process, he was arrested by the police and punished by the University authorities for 'nocturnal noisiness and drunkenness', involved in a duel in Cologne and investigated for possessing 'forbidden weapons' (i.e., duelling pistols and not merely swords). In October 1836, he had transferred to the

University of Berlin, where he had settled down to serious work, attending lectures in philosophy, history and history of art besides his main studies in law. By 1837 he had become a Young or Left Hegelian and a member of the radical 'Doctors' Club'. Against the romantic glorification of power and tradition he and his colleagues set the requirements of Reason in History, working inevitably through the dialectical contradictions of conflicting, empirical reality toward true freedom and true rationality. Even in his doctoral thesis, *The Difference Between the Democritean and the Epicurean Philosophies of Nature*, Marx set out to show in typical Hegelian fashion the inadequacy of an atomic theory which failed to give the atom its 'speculative development', failed to treat it as free and self-determined. Hegelian philosophy, Marx believed at this stage, even though betrayed by Hegel himself, was about to expose the contradictions of the Old Prussia and to usher in rational, secular democracy. When the new Prussian monarch, Frederick William IV, and his Education Minister Eichhorn began an official reaction against Hegelianism, Marx decided to submit his thesis to the University of Jena instead, and was awarded the doctorate on 15 April, 1841. A few months later the dismissal of his friend and fellow-Hegelian Bruno Bauer from the theological faculty in Bonn dashed Marx's confident hope of a lectureship there. He turned instead to writing—typical Hegelian politico-philosophical exposures of religious illusions, political censorship and feudal privilege. In January 1842 he composed for Arnold Ruge's radical *Anekdoten* a lengthy criticism of the Prussian King's instruction to censors and a brief theological note supporting Feuerbach's exposure of miracles. At the same time he began writing a series of political articles for the radical newspaper recently founded in Cologne, *Die Rheinische Zeitung*. On 14 November, 1842, Marx became its editor. The following morning the newspaper already carried an editorial footnote by Marx attacking the lawgiver who 'regards not human morality but spiritual holiness as the essence of marriage, and thus puts in place of self-determination determination from above, in place of the inner, natural inspiration a supernatural sanction, in place of a loyal submission to the nature of the relationship a passive obedience to decrees'. A month later Marx elaborated this theme in the article we have translated in the preceding pages. Three months later—on 17 March, 1843—Marx had to resign his editorship in what proved to be a fruitless attempt to avert the newspaper's suppression. He travelled to Holland, returned to marry Jenny von Westphalen and moved with her

to Paris in 1844 to begin an exile that kept him out of Germany for virtually all his life. In the beginning of 1844, after plunging into economics and French socialist literature, Marx proclaimed himself a socialist; by 1846 he was calling himself a Communist.

But in the period in which Marx wrote *The Divorce Bill* he was not a socialist. He certainly was a radical critic of the authoritarian Prussian state, of its censorship, of its privileges, of its revival of the system of estates. Yet the goals in which he believed were not set for him by the need for economic 'rationality', the relief of poverty or the plight of the proletariat. They were set for him by a passionate belief in freedom seen as human self-determination and mastery over man's environment. It was a belief that doubtless sprang from the internal resources of Marx's character, strengthened rather than weakened by the conflicts and insecurities imposed by his Jewish descent and early unbaptised childhood. It was given form and content in his student years by Hegelian philosophy. Philosophy, Marx believed, had reached through Hegel that final stage in which it would be reconciled with 'the world'; the final stage in which philosophy successfully exposes the discrepancies between the 'truly real' (i.e., the rational) and existing reality, so that philosophy becomes worldly and the world becomes philosophical. Philosophy, then, was for Marx practical, but its practicality consisted in *criticism*, not of 'abstract terms', of concrete social reality.

From Hegel Marx had learnt not to treat freedom as an external ideal, but to see it as the necessary and inevitable goal of history itself. In Hegel, freedom is represented by the Idea or Concept, underlying all history and empirical reality, and developing with strict logical necessity through a succession of partial, incomplete and contradictory forms toward the ultimately rational, fully harmonious and 'truly real', which is at once the historical and the moral end. From Feuerbach, and perhaps from Fichte, Marx learned to humanize the Idea, to treat the Concept working in history as a *human* essence, the end of history as a *human* unfolding. To recognize the working of this Concept, any Hegelian believed, is necessarily to be on its side, to distinguish good and evil in accordance with conformity or lack of conformity to the Concept's ends. It was thus that the youthful Marx could argue from at least one strain in Hegel's work, that the main mark of good is freedom (self-determination, independence), harmony, unity and stability, and the main mark of evil dependence (determination from without), divisiveness and instability. In *The Phenomenology of*

Mind and *The Philosophy of Right* Hegel had sought to show the 'irrationality' of civil society, of man's economic and material life, of his individual strivings, taken by themselves. To become rational, civil society needed to be completed by the rational, but coercive, state, which would force men to live harmoniously, and therefore freely. Marx's *humanism* leads him to see the inconsistency in Hegel's theory, the conflict between treating the state as an external, coercive force, and as the logical completion and rationalization of civil society itself. The human essence or spirit for Marx is what is common to all men—their essential nature—and it must therefore express itself above all in the unity of men, in overcoming the divisions created by their empirical particularity. Conflict for Marx, as for Rousseau and to some extent for Hegel, stems from the empirical distinctions among men; but for Marx these distinctions are temporary and derivative, not 'truly real', destined to be overcome by the unflowering of the human essence once man has ceased to be determined from without and determines himself from within. To do so, he must throw off the external determinations, the human self-alienation, imposed by religion, privilege, social classes and the coercive state. In place of these will come the rational society that arranges itself, in which empirical conflict and division have been replaced by distinctions that represent nothing but 'the spectrum of equality'. Here, every man in carrying out specific human social functions, will represent all other men; here all men, as 'universal', social beings, will recognize the common interest and work for it spontaneously.

It need no longer be surprising, then, that Marx should have begun his political activity by upholding natural law. At Berlin, Marx had attended lectures on jurisprudence by Gans, the Hegelian opponent of Savigny, and as an undergraduate Marx had planned a major work demonstrating the rational foundations of jurisprudence. Soon after his graduation, Marx wrote for the *Rheinische Zeitung* a vicious attack on the historical school of jurisprudence and on the morals of Hugo, whom Marx regards as its real founder. To treat law as an expression of the historical power of the 'irrational', as the tradition of a people or as an organic growth always true for its society, Marx insisted, is to abandon all legal standards, to treat whatever occurs as legally and morally right. For Marx, law is Reason, and therefore, no matter how paradoxical it sounds, law is also Freedom. 'Where the law is true law,' he had written in his articles on the Press debates in May, 1842, 'that is, where it is the existence of freedom, it is the true free existence of man. The laws, therefore, cannot

forestall man's actions, for they are the inner rules by which he acts, the conscious mirror images of his life. Law hence retreats before man's life as a life of freedom, and only when his actions have shown that he has ceased to obey the natural law of freedom, does the State law force him to be free.'

By 1847, Marx had ceased ever to speak of Reason or Natural Law. But he had not lost his faith in a rational society of truly universal, truly social men—a society in which the state and law would have withered away and been replaced by the truly human morality, expressing itself in rational social planning and spontaneous observance of the law of freedom. He liked, however, to give the impression that his vision of the future was not based on any philosophic conception of reason, but was rather a scientific conclusion—a discovery—based on empirical research into economics and history. As an historical account of Marx's own development this is false. By 1842, as we have seen, Marx had derived from his study of Hegel and Feuerbach his picture of the rational society—made, he believed, more consistent with the basic logic of Hegelianism itself by rejecting the coercive state postulated by Hegel. From 1843 onward, Marx became interested in a subsidiary problem which for him soon became the main one. This was not the nature of the ultimate rational society, or *whether* it would come about, but *how* it would come about. The anti-Hegelian reaction in Germany in the early eighteen-forties had shown in powerlessness of philosophic criticism, and of its bearers, the middle-class intelligentsia. Philosophy needed a 'material weapon',² which Marx discovered in the proletariat.

But from Hegel Marx had learnt that historical change should proceed with the inevitability of logical necessity, and Hegel himself had suggested, in *The Phenomenology of Mind*, that 'civil society'—all that which comprised the material, economic life of men—was by itself necessarily unstable, leading to growing impoverishment and to the Hobbesian war of all against all. Marx wanted to show that the material life of man was itself striving toward the rational goal—and in the pursuit of evidence, he plunged into economics and history. Everything he found there, he believed, confirmed the goal he had already conceived. Far from abandoning his early vision of the truly human society, Marx saw it strongly supported by his mature work.

² 'The weapon of criticism can certainly not supplant the criticism of weapons: material force must be overthrown by material force,' Marx wrote in his contribution to the *Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher* that appeared in February, 1844.

At first sight, of course, Marx's mature work appears to be a rational rejection of any concept of natural law or rational morality. Justice, he insists, is class justice, morality is a disguise for class interests. Moral principles and rules of law are not the product of some unhistorical faculty of reason, but reflect the requirements of economic interests, of the process of production, at given stages of social development. If Marx had in fact worked out this view consistently it would have been a perfectly sound refutation of natural law theories and of his own youthful postulation of 'rational' rules. But he did not work it out consistently. He did not do so precisely because he wanted to keep his belief in the possibility of an ultimate rationally planned society, a society in which economic life would be rationally planned and relations between human beings in their practical everyday life would have assumed 'the aspect of perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations as between man and man and as between man and nature'. It is for this reason that Marx consistently seeks to reduce all social conflict to economic conflict, and all economic conflict to private property. Private property can be abolished; therefore the 'fully realized' society, in which 'the spectrum of equality' replaces conflict and division, is no mere dream. It is essential to understand that for all of Engels' clumsiness in *Anti-Dühring* neither Marx nor Engels proclaimed a thorough-going moral or legal relativism; their economic reduction of ideologies begins and ends with the class society. When private property has been abolished, and when man ceases to be the tool of economic forces, but becomes their master, morality becomes truly human, rational and free. Law ceases to exist as an external compulsive force only because it ceases to be necessary.

If Marx's mature work continued to proclaim the same moral and historical end as his early writing, it was able to do so with any superficial plausibility only by also keeping the logic with which Marx began—the scholastic belief in essential natures which determine both what an activity or institution 'really is' and therefore what it ought to be. It is this fundamental error which enabled Marx to believe in natural law in his early period; it is the same error that enables him to treat the state and the legal system in class society as having *one* essential purpose, and therefore as withering away when that purpose disappears. It is on this essentialist reductionism—the weakest side of his mature theory—and on the early philosophical beliefs sketched above that Marx's confident belief in the rational society of the future rests.

The fact that the whole of his concrete economic and historical studies provided no proof of the 'necessity' of Communist society is something that Marx was able to obscure by immersing himself in the class struggle in class society. What truly human relationships, truly human law and truly human marriage would be like were questions he was able to avoid. Modern Soviet theoreticians, committed to the view that they have freed human relationships from the distortions of class conflict, have not been so fortunate. Like Marx in his early period, they want to say that their law is rational and free. 'For the first time in human history,' wrote A.Y. Vyshinsky on Soviet Law in 1938, 'there is eliminated the conflict between social interest and personal interest'. The constant suggestion is that *the* social interest can be rationally discovered; but there is no suggestion of precisely *how* it is discovered. It is for this reason that Soviet legal theory devotes most of its time to criticizing bourgeois distortions of law, not to displaying how 'true' law can be discovered, just as Soviet moral theorists devote no serious attention to the foundations of ethical judgment in socialist society, but vacillate between 'exposures' of class morality and moral exhortation directed at Soviet citizens. It is precisely because of this emptiness of 'rational' law that Soviet theoreticians, like Marx, have to fall back on vague popularism—on 'the will of the people'. It is thus that Lenin writes to Kursky in 1922: 'Not the *corpus juris Romani*, but our revolutionary consciousness of Justice ought to be applied to "Civil Law relations".' It is thus that Vyshinsky, claiming that true socialist law still has a 'creative role' to play, proclaims its single guiding principle—socialism! The shuffling backward and forward between the first and the third propositions proclaimed by Marx in his article on *The Divorce Bill*, between rationality and the will of the people, remains a fundamental—even if confused—tenet of Soviet political, moral and legal thinking. The emptiness of both principles can best be brought out by examining the foundations, and subsequent fate in Communist theory, of Marx's second proposition—that marriage is 'according to its concept' indissoluble.

The belief in a 'concept' of marriage is as common as it is confused. The Common Law, indeed, though it recognizes the *lex loci celebrationis* as determining the *form* of marriage through which the parties must go to make it a marriage,³ insists that

³ Unless, of course, the parties are married abroad according to the requirements of the law of their domicile, as when an Englishman is married according to Anglican rites in Tibet, without satisfying the requirements of Tibetan law.

no union is a marriage in its eyes unless the parties, in entering upon it, intended it to be permanent. It is thus that the High Court of England in 1930 held that a dissoluble union contracted in Soviet Russia, where this was the only form of marriage permitted, was not a marriage at all. The Court of Appeal, though it repudiated this statement of the law, did not repudiate the general principle that to be a marriage a union must be a voluntary union for life of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others—it merely held that the conditions under which a marriage was performed, even though allowing its subsequent dissolution at the will of either party,⁴ did not prevent the parties from intending a voluntary union for life. The whole position makes sense, however, only in so far as the Common Law is defining the sort of marriage it is prepared to recognize and to adjudicate. If any one pretended, as some have done, that the Common Law is *declaring* the true nature of marriage anywhere, that position could hardly be supported. The presumption in favour of the indissolubility of marriage, though accepted by the young Marx, is peculiar to Christian civilization. It is true that most legal systems regard marriage as more than a contract between individuals; they treat it also as creating new *status* for the contracting parties, and thus as creating extra-contractual rights and obligations (both toward each other and toward their children, for instance). But this did not prevent Roman law, for instance, from treating marriage not only as dissoluble by consent, but as dissoluble, at any moment, by either party. This conception of *liberum matrimonium* was so deeply rooted in Roman social life, that the Christian Church, though making marriage a religious institution and discouraging causeless divorce, in fact never induced legislation to abrogate the fundamental freedom.

That Marx cannot derive rules regarding the dissolution of marriage, or even a weak presumption in favour of its dissolubility, from any empirical study of the nature of marriage wherever it occurs is obvious enough. If the 'concept' of marriage is to be prescriptive content, Marx will be able to do this only by a circular process of defining marriage in a particular way which excludes those unions inconsistent with his view. In fact, his only *argument* against *liberum matrimonium* is a vague reference to social interest, and much loose play with the word 'caprice'. But just what *the* social interest in reference to marriage is, is precisely something over which there is argument. Thus,

⁴ Russian law, until amended in 1944, regarded a marriage as terminable at the will of either party.

while Marx throughout his life regarded love as a peculiarly intimate and permanent union of two natures, and remained quite unable to take seriously Engels' quite genuine attachment to his mistress, Engels, precisely on the grounds of the changed social conditions under Communism, insisted that marriage would then become a 'free union' in which neither party would ever feel or be bound against his or her personal will. It is this view which Madame A.M.Kollontay elaborated in her *Communism and the Family* (1920):

The family is ceasing to be a necessity of the State, as it was in the past; on the contrary, it is worse than useless, since it needlessly holds back the female works from more productive and far more serious work. . . . On the ruins of the former family we shall soon see a new form rising which will involve altogether different relations between men and women, and which will be a union of affection and comradeship, a union of two equal members of the communist society, both of them free, both of them independent, both of them workers.

Lenin, however, had already insisted in 1915 that 'freedom in love' meant only freedom from economic restraints, not freedom to lack 'seriousness', and Soviet official policy, concerned increasingly with creating 'social stability', fighting juvenile delinquency, and perhaps not unaware of the dangerous tensions between sexual freedom and political obedience, swung more and more toward propaganda and legislative pressure in favour of durable marriage. Thus the Soviet philosopher A.Shishkin writes in his book *The Foundations of Communist Morality* (1955):

Soviet people censure the contemptible bourgeois marriage without love. But they censure no less decidedly the love of the moment, which constantly needs a new object for its satisfaction. To both of these Soviet people oppose the proletarian 'marriage of love' (Lenin), i.e., the durable Soviet marriage, based on the moral purity of the relationship between marriage partners and strengthened by legal bonds. It is this type of marriage which has become characteristic of our society. Communist morality values highly and sets up as exemplary the durable, monogamous, life-long marriage between husband and wife. . . . Free both of egoism and of illusions regarding the divine, love as the moral basis of Soviet marriage and the family presupposes the friendship of husband and wife and their mutual concern for each other, so that each partner finds happiness in the other's happiness; it presupposes care for the children, their education as worthy sons, daughters of the socialist society; it presupposes the common devotion of the marriage partners to the great task of erecting the Communist society.

Shishkin, of course, establishes here nothing more definite than Marx's second proposition in *The Divorce Bill*—a rebuttal presumption in favour of the indissolubility of marriage. It is clear enough that it is based neither on a logical examination of the 'concept' of marriage, nor on the united will of the Soviet

people, who have not ceased to flock to the divorce courts. It arises, not out of the nature of society as such, or even of socialist society as such, but from the interaction of specific interests and policies in the Soviet Union, related to specific conditions and ways of life. What these conditions have clearly not established is some form of 'true marriage', radically different from bourgeois marriage, and it is one of the ironies of Soviet concern with 'stability' that it is leading not to a new, revolutionary consciousness of justice, but to a return to more specific and formalized legal rules that will make law more stable and predictable.

Alice Tay Erh Soon and Eugene Kamenka

HAS CHINA GOT THE BOMB?

By mid 1959 "militarily the Chinese were still dependent on a Soviet nuclear deterrent and it was as yet far from clear to what extent Moscow would use this deterrent to forward China's political objective . . . (The) discrepancy between China's political objectives and her military means must have awakened the leadership to the harmful effects of the division within the Chinese military."

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Smoking CAN BE fun!

Someone once remarked that it takes a lot of people to really complicate a simple issue. Take smoking, for instance. People have been doing it for years and find it quite easy and quite pleasant. Basically, you have a cylinder of tobacco wrapped in paper. You light one end and draw in the other. So—just in case you find yourself groping in a fog of doubt after reading about cigarettes being invested with disturbing semi-human attributes like talking and breathing—it may be reassuring to take out a Craven “A”—contemplate it for a moment to get the feel of it—just in case. Then light it up and rediscover that here indeed is one of life’s minor but quietly satisfying pleasures—and no different from what you hoped for. For Craven “A” gives you more of what a cigarette’s for—just pure smoking enjoyment from beginning to end.



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THE PROBLEM OF MODERN RELIGIOUS ART

J.P.Kenny

BEFORE coming to closer grips with the problem of modern religious art, a word about contemporary art in general. Not rarely this displays originality and imagination, occasionally even to an astonishing degree. Commonly, sloughing off inessentials, it addresses us through a stark simplicity of form. It can be strong and highly intellectual; seldom, if ever, is it sentimental. In the onlooker it works like a catalyst; it may provoke his contempt or fan his enthusiasm; never does it leave him indifferent. It is typical of modern art to be challenging—sometimes with unmistakable inspiration and authentic vision.

By contrast, one also encounters less admirable qualities. To four of these I must call attention. For while I warmly advocate the use of modern art in our churches, I am by no means blind to those blemishes in it that mar its suitability for religious expression.

(1) Not seldom contemporary art is blatant, unalloyed self-expressionism. Of course, every artist needs breathing-room for reasonable self-expression. Denied that, his art is stifled. But under the aegis of self-expression, some artists foist on us all sorts of extravagances. They are too much preoccupied with self; too little with expression. One cannot have healthy art where the artist cabins himself within the airless hole of his own egoism.

(2) Closely allied to this ailment is the second; too much pure subjectivism in modern art. Intelligible symbols and clues are scornfully withheld.

By definition, the work of art is a communication between its creator and its beholder; it is essentially outward-looking, social—like the faculty of conceptual speech. It is the mark of the madman exclusively to address himself. Likewise it is a perversion of art to drain it of objective content; to refuse to make it a bridge of communication with one's fellows. Such art is necessarily stricken with sterility.

(3) Thirdly, much modern art rides rough shod over the dignity of the human person. One detects this vice in the fierce and unbridled caricatures of womanly beauty that weary us in contemporary exhibitions.

Against such rank and offensive distortions one must protest; they amount to a veritable cult of the ugly for its own sake. Nevertheless, uninformed critics of contemporary art are too glib in block-condemnations of all its distortions. Where distortion is functional, where it springs from the artist's discharging his role of selecting and stressing, it is beyond criticism. What is more, it is inalienable from true art in every sphere.

(4) Lastly, modern art-exhibitions abound in paintings that are no more than technical exercises, experiments in spatial relations, essays in tensions of reds and yellows. Instead of grappling with problems of real significance, many a modern artist is content to pursue some line of pure research, dissipating his talents in what is comparatively frivolous. This is one reason for the man-in-the-street's contempt for the artist. Imagine how quickly electrical engineers or architects would lose the respect of the public if they refused to light our streets or build our houses and, instead, busied themselves in technical experimentations of no practical significance.

Too often the modern artist manifests an insufficiently grand concept of his status as artist. He has been endowed by God with a beauty-making power enabling him to sway his fellow-man. He makes his impact on the soul through the eyes; and no mightier impact can be made than so. That is why the Church always has, and always will, enlist his services. Her mandate is universal. She realizes that truth will touch the minds of her millions only when it is arrayed in the garment of beauty.

In concrete terms, the problem of modern religious art means this: 'How can we most suitably decorate the churches we are building in Australia today?'

Two principles are at stake. First, for the adornment of God's house, just because it is God's house, we must sincerely aim at the best within our means; we must honestly strive to put there only what is of sterling worth; we shall not tolerate what is artistically valueless or meretricious. The second principle is that art in a church has a task to do. In a gallery or museum, a bank or private home, objects of art may be displayed for a variety of reasons: to be contemplated, to adorn, record, move, delight, amuse, instruct. In a church, however, a work of art is set up to the glory of God in order *to teach* religious truth in the way most appealing and accessible to the particular congregation in question. Art has its place in a church in order to help people pray better, to stir up their devotion, to evoke a mood in which prayer comes more readily.

The problem thus defined receives no solution from commercialized art. We must, I suppose, make due allowance for the susceptibilities of people who have had no chance to go into the question. But, in general, the quicker we rid our churches of objects of commercialized art, the better. And this for three reasons. The first is dogmatic and will weigh only with Catholics: in 1952 the Holy Office in Rome enjoined that stereotyped statues and pictures be banned from the churches. The second is philosophic. mass-produced objects of piety, mechanically turned out by the score like sardine-tins, cannot fairly be classed as genuine art, which is one of the loftiest expressions of the human spirit and therefore, necessarily vital, creative, personal. The honour due to God demands that we shall decorate his temple only with what has the authentic ring of art and beauty. The third objection to commercialized art is that in so far as it inculcates any ideas at all, it is prone to inculcate false ones. A little girl, going with her mother into a church, looked at the garish plaster statue of the Sacred Heart and said: 'Mummy, what's that lady doing with the tomato?' About to beat the child for blasphemy, the mother eyed the statue closely. She realized that the child had innocently scored a point. To present divine love incarnate as a bearded young lady exhibiting her heart cannot promote a deeper understanding of the strength and the majesty of God's mercy.

Similar criticisms are relevant to the commercialized travesties of Our Lady. Not only do they signally fail to convey the slightest inkling that here is represented God's blessed mother; they do not even suggest that here is a woman of average force of character; one sees simply a simpering, teenage doll.

Again, the problem of modern religious art cannot be met by resorting to copies and reproductions of masterpieces of the past. Of course, we should gladly and proudly recognize the Church's colossal contribution to art across two thousand years. Indeed we should school ourselves to appreciate the vast scale of her achievement, and not confine our knowledge, as too often is done, to the Renaissance; for the religious value of Renaissance art is by no means equal to its artistic merit. From the religious point of view it is naturalistic, humanistic, neo-pagan, far below such Christian movements as the Byzantine, Gothic or Italian primitive.

Reproductions of the masterpieces of the past, then, we must have. But their proper place is in our schools and houses of formation, not in our churches. To decorate our churches with them cannot be claimed as offering God the best. At our door-

step, in our Australian artists, there is outstanding talent. They can furnish us with personal and original work of high artistic competence. It would be lazy and defeatist consistently to pass them by in favour of reproductions.

Moreover, unless we jettison reproductions and install the work of living Australian artists, we shall never have in our churches an art that is vitally instructive. The glorious achievements of the past are the product of cultures and generations far different from our own. We hold the same faith as they held; but we hold it in conditions they never dreamt of. We are troubled with our own special problems; we have our own accent and emphasis. To decorate our modern edifices with works that slavishly imitate the past is to dull and enervate the message our Australian people have a right to hear.

Students of literature admire the prose of Samuel Johnson or Edmund Burke. Yet today no speaker would be so foolish as to harangue an Australian audience with those Latinized, periodic sentences, with that studied eloquence, drawing its illustrations from harquebuses and quill-pens and stage-coaches. The successful speaker uses the crisp and racy style of the day, appealing to aeroplanes and fluorescent-lighting for his examples. Likewise with religious art: under pain of forfeiting its role of effective teacher, it must follow the contemporary idiom.

Reluctantly and cautiously one might admit reproductions of excellent contemporary religious art into a church too poor to commission original work. But in this event it would seem preferable to wait till the necessary funds were forthcoming or until an artist were discovered who would be sufficiently unencumbered and at the same time willing to work solely for the glory of God.

Twentieth century art is markedly symbolic and abstract in tendency. Can it do service in our churches? Plainly the answer must be *no* whenever modern symbolic art labours under the defects listed above. Especially will this be so when there is a lack of intellectual commitment, or where the work is a mere projection of amorphous, subjective feeling. But when modern art is pruned of these excesses (which, if allowed to grow, will finally strangle, as already they have dehumanized, much of it), the answer is *yes*. I am convinced that, granted the enlightened patronage of the pastor commissioning the artist, symbolic art can become an admirable vehicle for doing what art in the church should do.

Throughout the history of art in every civilization and in every country and in every century, any particular art-school

or movement tends either to symbolism or representation. Representational art aims at giving a faithful copy of nature; it describes and photographs the external face of things. It is realistic. At its best, it gives us Greek and Renaissance art; at its worst, the chocolate-box girl and the most mawkish of our Christmas cards. At the Renaissance, representational art was floated on such a sea of genius that its primacy was unchallenged even by artists till Cézanne, and is still quite unchallenged by most people unversed in the history and philosophy of art. One can gauge its influence from the fact that most people still today naively assume that the only aim an artist can have is mechanically to imitate the outward appearance of things. Unthinkingly they argue: 'That's a good painting, because it looks like a gum tree.' Given such a premise, the camera, of course, is the consummate artist.

The alternative trend towards symbolism and abstraction is not concerned with recording the superficial aspect of things; it grapples with ideas; it is intellectual; it seeks the core of reality. At its best, it produced the classical art of ancient Egypt, of China, Persia, Java; peasant art of all sorts; the art of the Russian icons. So far as Christianity goes, the majority and the greatest of authentically Christian art-forms manifest a decided predilection for symbolism as against representation. For example, Romanesque, Coptic, Gothic and, above all, Byzantine. This latter represents perhaps the heyday of Christian art; from the sixth century mosaics in Ravenna to the thirteenth century ones at St Mark's, Venice, it formed a chief channel of Christian instruction. Besides, strictly liturgical art is mostly abstract—one has only to recall vestment—decorations: the IHS, the Alpha and Omega, the Chi-Rho, the blade of wheat, the cross.

When we ask ourselves: 'Representational or symbolic art—which can better serve us suitably to decorate our modern churches?' surely brief reflection will prompt the answer: symbolism. We shall rejoice that such, in fact, is the ascendant idiom of our age and our country.

If one is to shun shallowness in Christian art, some elements of symbolism and abstraction seem required. The purely representational cannot bear the brunt of conveying the mysteries of our faith. One is familiar with Guido Reni's *Crucifixion*, so often reproduced in missals and prayer-books. The original is an altar-piece in San Lorenzo in Lucina, Rome; it is an acclaimed chef-d'oeuvre of Renaissance painting; the flesh is portrayed with that typical eloquence and perfection unrivalled by any

other art-school that man has ever known. But what does Guido Reni give us? Only a handsome athlete on a cross. What does he teach of the mystery of God-in-the-flesh dying for men?

Or take the typical Renaissance Madonna. To focus our attention on the physical loveliness of a haloed Italian woman is not a help, but a hindrance, for the communication of the profound dogmatic truths about Our Lady.

If one plumps for a representational solution, it seems that logically a person who wants a picture of St Joan of Arc should hang up a photograph of Ingrid Bergman as she appeared in the title-role of the superb film on Joan. Ingrid Bergman is a consummate actress; her interpretation of Joan was both reverent and thought-provoking; besides, the historical accuracy of the episodes was guaranteed by Père Doncoeur, a renowned scholar. Yet all of us feel that there is no room in a church for Ingrid as Joan. We feel this, not only because Ingrid's life is less edifying than Joan's. We feel it because this extreme example hammers home a fundamental of religious art: its function is not to tell us what a person looked like; its function is to be a symbol of faith.

When I advocate using modern symbolic art, I must not be understood as holding a brief for abstract art in our churches unreservedly.

One must distinguish between semi-, and pure, abstract art. They can be totally different realities. The first involves no serious difficulty and seems to me (I can claim the support of history) the ideal medium for religious expression.

But pure abstract art is harder to justify. It can, of course, be genuine art—not only in wall-papers, carpets and frock patterns, but also in paintings, mosaics and stained glass. Nevertheless, because exclusively abstract art permits no human figures to intrude, it easily succumbs to two temptations, particularly damaging to Christian art: that of pure subjectivism and that of denying (by implication) the Incarnation. When in fact it falls victim to either of these tendencies, it plainly cannot be tolerated in a church. This calls for closer examination.

Too often purely abstract art sins by giving you something that can be anything. I have in mind such a painting as Stanislaus Rapotec's *Via Crucis*. Had it been called 'harbour at night', 'asphalt under red neons', 'squabbling cats', it would not have made the slightest difference to the average beholder—even to the man who wanted to understand. Such a painting is religiously reprehensible. For Christianity is not a vague pantheism nor an empty, pious emotionalism. Its world is objective; it pivots

around historical personages and events. Its message and its truths are clear-cut, even when sublime to the pitch of mystery. When, therefore, an artist takes the Passion or Resurrection for his theme, he must convey objectively, and as luminously as possible, a sense of this particular mystery. It is not enough that he conjure up in the onlooker some inarticulate religious mood.

Again, one cannot but look askance at the artist who, at all costs and under all circumstances, slams the door shut on every figurative motif. Such a ruthless attitude carried with it by logical analysis a repudiation of the Incarnation. For this truth states precisely that the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; that the Invisible became visible by taking the nature of man, with its outward, sense-perceptible form. The artist who truculently and on principle debar from his work even a formalized or stylized figure of Christ can hardly proclaim with conviction this truth which is the hub of human history.

But some non-figurative art may indeed be religiously satisfactory. It may, for example, evoke a mood stimulating prayer and devotion. This is brilliantly achieved in the modern stained glasses of France and Switzerland. Or it may powerfully teach through the vigour and intelligibility of its symbols. An example of this is Ernest Philpot's *Crucifixion*, a former Blake Prize painting.

As in other matters, so in art, the Church is no friend to stagnation. Christian art is only truly in touch with its traditions when it is ready to be contemporary. All the various and justly celebrated styles of art fostered by the Church were, each in its own day, modern.

The solution to the problem of modern religious art lies in the discreet employment of the contemporary artist.

J.P.Kenny



"Neither a borrower nor a lender be . . ."

Such was the advice of Polonius who, in happier circumstances, might have been Hamlet's father-in-law. But no one with the slightest understanding of modern economics would expect this maxim to be heeded to-day.

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END OF A CAPTIVE

David Martin

JINNY pulled the tattered old sack more closely about her until she looked like a disreputable tramp sheltering in a ditch from the rain. Although the sun was beating down on to the monkey house, she was shivering slightly. It was afternoon; the shadows were lengthening into her cage. Holding on to the sack with one hand, she slowly walked into the middle of the sunny patch close to the grating and huddled down with her nose against the bars.

The keeper passed by and put down a mug of milk on the ledge outside. Jinny extended her arm and lifted the mug in with her right hand. Then, carefully, she transferred it to her left and, shutting her eyes, began to drink noisily. 'Doesn't seem to be very lively,' a middle aged man, a visitor, said to the keeper.

'She's nearly at the end of her tether,' the keeper replied, looking at Jinny as she drank. 'Twenty-two years. That's a good age for a Chimp. Last year we lost a male: they don't live so long.'

'Males have more to worry about,' the middle aged man said, and laughed. The keeper nodded. Jinny had finished with her milk and handed back the mug. He filled it again, put it down on the ledge for her to drink when she wanted it, and went away.

Jinny looked after him. He was a new man—that is, he had been working in the zoo for only a year. But for Jinny time had almost lost its meaning. She still had a vague memory of the other keeper, the one who had looked after her for the best part of her life, ever since her girlhood. Sometimes, when she saw the new keeper coming towards her in the morning, and when he was still some way off, she thought that he was the other man and stood up with a flicker of joy. His was the only human face she could clearly distinguish.

Jinny knew that she had nearly reached her end. All her movements had become slow and dragging; she was full of aches and tiredness. Gazing down at her hands she opened and closed them slowly. The mug had seemed heavy.

Yes, she knew that she was very close to death. And she knew, too, how it would be. It would be as it had been with her companion, who had died only recently. He had lain, huddling against her unto the very last moment, coughing and crying with the pain in his chest. In the morning he was cold and unresponsive. They had taken him away, and from that day

onward she had been alone. She also would have liked to have someone, a friend, to huddle against and to hold onto for comfort, but there was nobody. There were apes in the adjoining cage, but they were Orang Utangs. She desired nothing of them, unless it was a young one, a baby, who still clung to his mother. She would have liked to touch him, to feel his little round head, and to press his small body against her own. Turning, she could see him scampering about with his serious face, blinking and playing with the shells of peanuts and the bits of cardboard which littered the cage. He was so young and alive!

Her eyes hurt. Blood-shot and filmy, they made people uneasy to look at them. She turned her face from the sun but, after a few moments, a weary curiosity made her turn once more. The world outside was shrinking rapidly. The ice cream kiosk beyond the flower beds was a blur of green and red. The miniature arena beneath the shady trees where, twice every day during the summer, the trained animals performed, was all but invisible to her now. There she had pedalled a tricycle in the days gone by, and there, sitting at a little table, she had dined for the amusement of onlookers. These things, of course, she could no longer remember, but this corner, which until lately had bounded her horizon, had always meant excitement and change. Now age had driven her back upon the cage with the withered mockery of a tree, the high, smooth walls and the swinging door at the back.

After some time Jinny grew too tired to hold on to her sugar bag. She let it drop to the floor and sat on it. This sack meant much to her, and she would not part with it. She had dragged it after her, all over the cage, for the last two or three weeks, refusing a cleaner one which the keeper, thinking of the patrons, had left for her use. Once he had actually tried to take it away from her, but she had become angry; a last, savage and unexpected outburst which had astonished him with its vehemence. Since then she had been left in undisturbed possession and was guarding it jealously, as if her remaining strength had taken refuge in the coarse, dirty cloth. She was sitting on it now, her back supported by the wall, her feet resting against the bars and her hands on the ground, gnarled and useless.

Because she did not move but merely stared through half closed lids, visitors did not bother to waste time on her. Moreover, lolling within reach of the untouched milk, with her lips drawn back to show the stumps of her teeth, she was not attractive to watch. Jinny was too much like an aged woman; too untidy, too much past caring.

So the afternoon wore on until, at five o'clock, the bell rang and the visitors prepared to leave. Feeding time had come and gone but she still sat on her sack as before. Uneaten on the ground lay the bananas and the windfall apples. The keeper was speaking to her, holding her unresisting hand in his own:

'Well, Jinny, old girl? What's the matter with you? Aren't you hungry?' He held out to her a sticky bon-bon which a child had thrown to her but which had fallen outside, between the grating and the barrier. Jinny took it from him and put it in her mouth. But she chewed it with such an expression of indifference that the keeper, moved against his will, and thinking of his other duties, left her to herself.

The night came and filled the cage with darkness. The chatter of the monkeys ceased. The Orangs in the adjacent enclosure had settled down to sleep, the baby tucked safely in the crook of his mother's arm. Jinny could now open her eyes wide. It was a balmy night, a night of great depth and tenderness.

Jinny had been born in captivity; she was the oldest ape in the zoo. The gardens were her home. With few interruptions her whole life had been spent in the same cage, the smallest detail of which had long ago become so familiar that she had ceased to notice them. Here she had played as a young Chimp, had been punished for her misdemeanours and had run squealing to her mother for protection. Here she had spent the years of her youth, had fought and sulked and loved. Her first mate—he had died quickly, unable to acclimatize himself—had ruled her here. So had her second, and here also she had given birth. Her issue had been taken away: she remembered nothing of him, not even her anguish when he had disappeared. Light in the cage, darkness in the cage, light in the cage, darkness . . . and now she was old. All she craved still was warmth, warmth and protection. A body like her own to rest against. She stretched backward and gripped the bars, holding fast to them with all her might. They had the good feel of the long known, but the unnatural position tired her. With a grunt she let go and fell back on the sack, full length.

She tried to sit up again, to regain her propped up position, but it was impossible. She was sweating profusely, and mingling with her sweat was moisture from her eyes. Helplessly she was weeping, too feeble almost to wipe her tears. She heard herself whimper, and hoped the keeper would come, but at the same time she knew that he would not come, for it was night, and he never came at night. She stopped crying and listened, but what she could hear was only the rustling of a mouse. So she started to

sob again, quietly and hopelessly, as the old sometimes do, in the middle of the night.

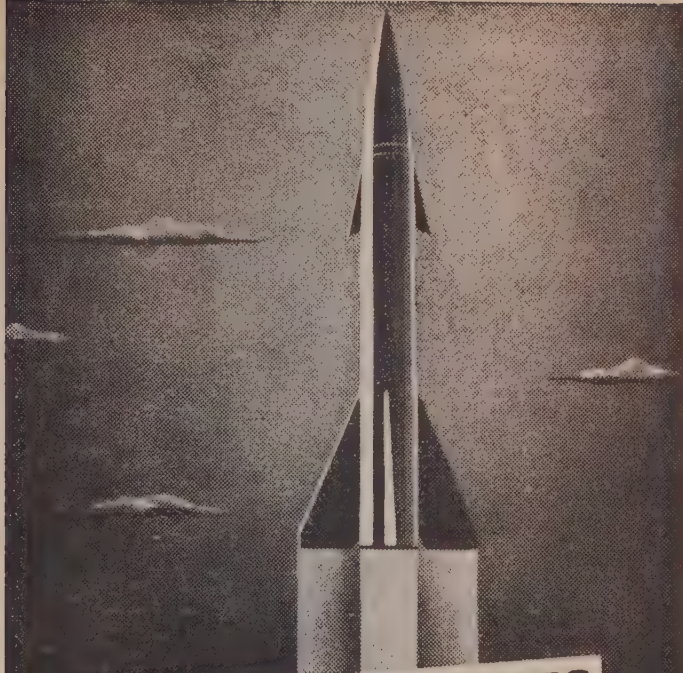
The sweet that the keeper had given her had some paper clinging to it. It stuck to the roof of her mouth. She could not swallow it and tried to take it out, but it was too far back and her hands were shaking. She tried to remove it with her tongue, but the perverse piece of paper refused to be removed. In the end she gave it up.

The moon was coming up. Little by little it filled the cage with a soft blue light. With an effort Jinny rolled over on to her side and looked at the tree which, ghost like, stood in the centre of her cage. It was a poor dead thing that did duty for a living forest; nevertheless she wanted to climb it again. If you got to the very top, you could look over the ring where the animals performed, across the distant wall of the gardens, to the houses beyond. Not that she had been able to see so far for a long time. But still, how good it would be to climb it once more, to get away from the flat, hard ground under her feet, to which she was fettered by age and infirmity! To die in the fork of that dried-up tree would be better. But even if she did manage to get up there, she would have to leave the sack behind.

Jinny gripped the edge of the sack and relapsed into semi-consciousness. Her breath was coming in hard, rattling gasps; her chest was heaving and her legs and feet were stretched uncomfortably before her. Her head was hot, but the rest of her body was steeped in ice, in an unearthly coldness against which there was no defence. With all the strength that remained in her she pressed against the sack, sometimes imagining that it was not a lifeless, rough piece of cloth, but a friendly and loving body. Her face had sunk forward onto her chest, partly from weakness and partly because she was seeking the warmth of her own flesh.

Into her agony came the sudden roar of a lion, a sound that filled the whole night and shook it with a mighty defiance. To Jinny it came as a last summons. Half choking, she once more turned to the iron grill and, using both her hands, pulled herself up into a standing position. The roar had ceased as suddenly as it had started, but she was still standing and swaying and blinking into the night with tears rolling over her nose, and she was softly chattering to herself. The effort grew too great; her legs could not support her weight and there, at the very edge of the cage, she collapsed. The last thing she knew was that she had lost the sack.

David Martin



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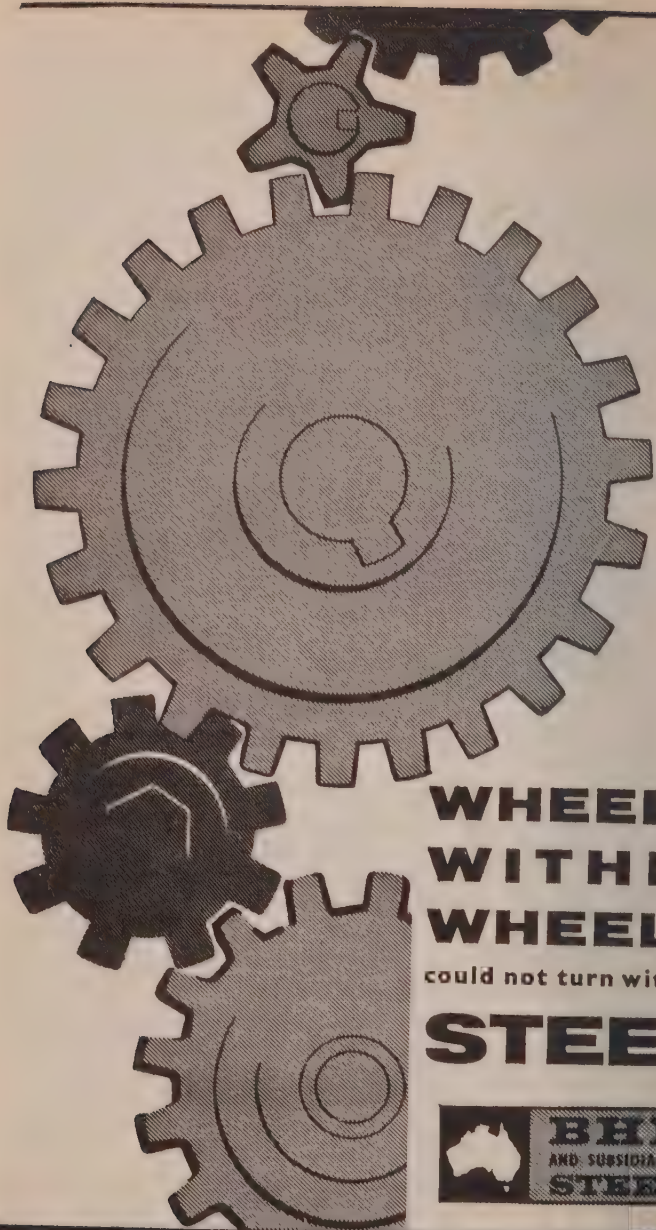
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THE KOOKABURRA WHICH COULDN'T

Dal Stevens

A KOOKABURRA was never known to laugh and caused his wife considerable distress. 'All kookaburras laugh and have always done so,' she told him. 'Who are you to be different and make us both conspicuous?'

'I am myself,' he said. 'I am master of my fate and captain of my soul. When I see something worth laughing at, why, then I'll laugh. Meanwhile, I don't propose to laugh just because everyone else does so.'

One day the Kookaburra's wife was flying through the bushland when her eyes lit on a bottle of liquid labelled 'Laughing Gas'.

'I wonder?' she cogitated. 'Yes, indeed, it is surely the very thing.'

With some difficulty she contrived to carry the bottle back to the home gum tree and secrete it in a hollow in which she had laid her eggs. The following morning she sprinkled some drops on the breakfast snack of snake she served her husband.

Within minutes his eyes watered and he began to cackle.

'Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!' He exclaimed. 'Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! This snake is really funny! Ha, ha, ha!'

Soon he passed into paroxysms of cackling laughter while all the other kookaburras stared unbelievably and the kookaburra's wife acquired an irritatingly smug look.

While this was happening a large black snake crawled up the tree and thrust his head into the hollow in search of eggs. As he did so, he knocked over the bottle and spilt the entire contents.

'My children! Save my children!' shrieked the kookaburra's wife.

'Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!' cackled the kookaburra. 'That—ha, ha, ha, ha,—I—ha, ha, ha, ha,—will—ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!'

And laughing frenziedly he flew to attack the snake which was so huge and venomous that all the other kookaburras were cowed and retreated to limbs high up the tree.

'Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!' shouted the kookaburra, rocking and reeling through the air. He tumbled close to the snake which struck savagely. The fangs ripped narrowly past the kookaburra's neck and tore out some feathers.

'Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! That was—ha! ha! ha! ha!—close!

Ha! Ha!!' roared the kookaburra, bearing down uncertainly once more on the snake. The snake struck again, so savagely that all the kookaburras flinched. The fangs flashed sparingly across the kookaburra's back. 'Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!' shrieked the kookaburra, his eyes streaming tears, and struck the snake's head with his beak. In truth it was a feeble blow. The kookaburra's ribs were sore and his muscles weak from laughter. But the snake sighed heavily and lay still—overcome mainly by the large amount of laughing gas he had inhaled.

The koobaburra, cackling hysterically, alighted beside the recumbent snake and, after some ill-directed slashes with his beak, decapitated him.

The kookaburra's renown was great in the bushland after this feat and there was a change thereafter in his behaviour which was eminently to his wife's satisfaction—for a while. Of him they said, 'He attacked a huge snake and laughed louder than any other kookaburra. Indeed, when he laughs there isn't a kookaburra to come within decibels of him.'

Striving to maintain his reputation, that which made him different from every other kookaburra, the kookaburra laughed frequently and excessively. In time his wife came to complain, 'You make us both conspicuous.'

She did not have to endure her embarrassment too long. The kookaburra who frequently coupled his bouts of Homeric laughter with daring attacks on very large and poisonous snakes, tempted his luck too much one day.

Dal Stivens

BERLIN CONFERENCE OF THE CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin over 200 writers, scholars and statesmen have gathered between June 16 and June 22 to participate in a discussion entitled **PROGRESS IN FREEDOM**. Speakers included the former West German President Theodor Heuss, the founder of the Indian Praja Socialist Party Jayaprakash Narayan, the physicist Robert Oppenheimer, a Mali Federation political leader, Gabriel d'Arboussier, and writers Ignazio Silone and Salvador de Madariaga.

THE WEAPON OF TRADE

Yuan-li Wu

I

WHILE Communist China's military infringements of the frontiers of its neighbours to the south and south-west have understandably attracted wide international attention, another aspect of Chinese Communist strategy in Asia—less spectacular but, in the long run, of much greater consequence—has been receiving far less notice abroad than it deserves. This is Peking's steadily expanding effort to develop trade and other economic ties with the free Asian nations, particularly the underdeveloped countries of south-east Asia, with the long-range objective of absorbing them into Communist China's economic and political orbit.

The far-reaching economic and political implications of these 'peaceful' activities have not, to be sure, escaped the attention of some of the countries most directly concerned. Thailand's action banning imports from Communist China and Malaya's invocation of an anti-'dumping' law against Chinese goods early this year, though perhaps prompted in the main by immediate economic considerations, nevertheless reflect growing awareness of the broader dangers, present or potential, which Peking's strategy holds for the free Asian nations. Similarly, Burma and Ceylon, as a result of their own unhappy experience in economic dealings with Communist China a few years ago, have become so wary of Chinese motives and trading practices that Peking has found it necessary to tread more softly and to grant financial credits in an effort to repair the damage caused by its earlier over-aggressiveness. In contrast to this increasing awareness in a number of Asian countries, however, a full appreciation of the character, purposes, and potential effects of the Chinese Communist economic drive in free Asia is still lacking among the general public in the West.

To a certain extent, of course, Communist China's expanding activity in the field of foreign trade is a natural consequence of the growth of the domestic economy. Even though the much-publicized 'great leap forward' of 1958 is now acknowledged to have been far more modest than originally claimed, there is no question that the Chinese national economy has grown at a rapid rate since the inception of the first Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), and that this has brought a concomitant increase in China's

foreign trade capabilities. Nevertheless, the expansion of Communist China's economic relations with the Asian countries has taken certain directions, and involved sacrifices of domestic economic needs and welfare, that cannot readily be explained on purely economic grounds. For another thing, it has been brought about by methods which can hardly be regarded as typical of normal practice in the development of foreign trade. Finally, and most important, Communist China's conduct of its external economic dealings has evidenced a disposition to utilize the augmentation or withholding of trade as a weapon for exerting pressure on the free Asian governments. In short, Chinese Communist strategy *vis-à-vis* free Asia manifests certain distinctive features of economic warfare.

In what may be termed its elementary aspect, economic warfare embraces actions which are relatively short-term in character and, more often than not, are immediately inspired by economic rather than political considerations. As one specific category, it includes any type of arbitrary or abnormal economic action resorted to as a more or less temporary device for the purpose of gaining a foreign trade advantage which the country using it would not be able to obtain under normal trading conditions. The employment of such familiar—but generally condemned—practices as 'dumping', 'price-cutting', and other forms of 'unfair competition' in order to capture a foreign market fall in this category. Another slightly different category embraces actions involving the deliberate acceptance of an abnormal economic sacrifice for the purpose of inducing a foreign country to grant economic or political concessions. The best illustration of this type of action is provided by Peking's extension of financial grants and credits to underdeveloped Asian countries—a clearly abnormal practice in the light of Communist China's own desperate need of capital for domestic industrial development.

In contrast to this limited, short-run aspect, economic warfare also has a much broader, strategic aspect in which it is focused primarily on the achievement of long-range political objectives. Attainment of these objectives normally entails the realization of a simultaneous economic gain, but the latter is not the primary motivation. Simply stated, the end goal of economic warfare in the long-range sense is the absorption into the waging country's economic orbit of another country's economy, not so much for economic reasons *per se* as to permit subjection of the target country to political domination.

A country practising economic warfare with such long-range

political objectives in mind can achieve its aims primarily through measures designed to render the target country's economy so dependent upon its own that the exertion of economic pressure can force political compliance. While it is difficult to state with general validity precisely what degree of economic dependence must be created to obtain this result, there is no question that any substantial increase of the waging country's share in the target country's overall import and/or export trade, or in the latter's total imports and/or exports of certain vital commodities, necessarily results in a corresponding augmentation of the target country's dependence.

This brings out the close interrelationship between the short-term and long-range levels of economic warfare. To the extent that the short-term measures described earlier succeed in expanding the waging country's share in the trade of the target country, they can help to realize longer-range political objectives. On the other hand, it is also possible, as has actually occurred in some areas of Communist China's external economic activity, for the waging country to be so inept in its conduct of short-term economic warfare—either by overplaying its hand or by exerting economic pressure prematurely—as to defeat its own long-run purposes.

It follows from the broad conception of economic warfare just outlined that, contrary to some popularly held notions, its practice need not always entail the sufferance of an economic loss by the practising country. Certain measures may, indeed, result in temporary loss, but others produce an economic gain even though their primary purpose is political rather than economic.

II

Perhaps the dominant feature of Asian trade development in recent years has been the marked expansion of Communist China's exports to most of the free Asian countries. This trend stands out with particular prominence in the period since 1956, when it has to be viewed against the background of concurrently declining exports from several Asian countries to Communist China. It poses two highly pertinent questions. First, to what extent has Communist China already succeeded, through its export drive, in acquiring a larger share of the import markets of the Asian countries concerned? Secondly, what does Communist China hope to accomplish by this drive, and what are some of the present effects and potential future effects on the free Asian nations?

In a developing economy like Communist China's, it is normal for exports to expand with increasing productive capacity. What must be realized, however, is that in China's case the expansion has been pushed much farther than the actual rise in domestic production, related to China's own internal economic needs, would warrant. This is abundantly clear from the fact that cotton textiles and several other consumer items produced by light manufacturing industry have figured prominently in the exports expansion drive at the same time that domestic shortages of these commodities and rationing restrictions on their consumption have steadily intensified.

Moreover, while the increase in exports to a few areas, in particular Hong Kong, may be attributed in part to Communist China's need to earn sterling in order to meet payment deficits incurred in Chinese trade with the Soviet bloc and to build up its foreign currency reserve, the expansion of Chinese exports to such countries as Indonesia and Cambodia cannot be similarly explained in terms of any compelling economic reason. Generally speaking, Communist China does not have a *large* demand for the raw materials which most Asian countries can supply, nor can Chinese export earnings in non-convertible currencies be used elsewhere. It seems obvious, therefore, that normal and legitimate economic motives, though operative to a varying degree in certain areas of Communist China's external economic activities, do not by themselves provide a wholly adequate explanation of why and how that country's trade with some of the free Asian nations has taken the course indicated by the statistics. Thus, to find the answer to the second of the two questions posed, one is inevitably led to scrutinize Chinese economic activities affecting free Asia not merely from a strictly economic standpoint but also from the broader standpoint of both short- and long-range economic warfare objectives. China's trade dealings with Burma and Ceylon afford particularly illuminating case studies in this regard.

The case of Burma is edifying, above all, as an example of a fairly obvious attempt by Communist China to make an underdeveloped Asian economy which relies upon a single major export—in this case, rice—economically dependent upon the Chinese market, and hence vulnerable to Chinese Communist economic as well as political pressure. This attempt began in 1955 when Burma's big rice surplus presented a favourable opportunity for Communist China and the Soviet Union to step in with a joint offer to make large annual purchases of Burmese rice. By the terms of the resultant agreement, Com-

Communist China committed itself to purchase an annual quota of 150,000 tons of rice from Burma, to be paid for partly by exports of Chinese goods, partly by Chinese re-exports of goods originating from the Soviet European bloc, and partly in sterling. The arrangement was made highly attractive to Burma by Chinese agreement to a stipulated price for Burmese rice higher than the prevailing world market price.

Actually, however, the transaction proved far less satisfactory from the Burmese standpoint than the original offer had seemed to promise. The reason was that Burma, while exporting the agreed annual amounts of rice to China, had difficulty in finding Chinese export items which it wished to import in part payment. The upshot of this one-sided situation was that China finally offered to meet its obligations under the rice-barter agreement by furnishing Burma with machinery and equipment for a textile mill, together with the necessary technical assistance for setting up the mill. Although the offer appears to have been accepted and implemented, the difficulties experienced by Burma have undoubtedly been an important cause of the steady decline in Sino-Burmese trade since 1956.

In a number of respects, Communist China's trade dealings with Ceylon have displayed the same characteristic as its dealings with Burma. Trade between the two countries, until recently, consisted almost exclusively of an exchange of only two items—rice from China in exchange for Ceylonese rubber. Under a five-year agreement entered into in 1953, China contracted to supply Ceylon with 270,000 tons of rice annually in return for 50,000 tons of rubber, both at stipulated prices which were initially much more favourable to Ceylon than prevailing world market prices. It should be noted that rubber is Ceylon's second largest export next to tea, and its most important export of an industrial raw material; and also that China's contract to buy 50,000 tons annually would make it the dominating export market for Ceylonese rubber.

Again, however, as in the case of Burma, Ceylon's experience under the agreement was not satisfactory. While Ceylonese rubber exports to China were appreciably above the contract level except in 1955 and 1957, China on its side was never able to fill its annual 270,000-ton quota for rice exports to Ceylon despite the fact that, in 1955, it used rice obtained under the agreement with Burma for this purpose. The result was the accumulation of a sizeable sterling credit in Ceylon's favour, which in turn provided China with a means of exerting pressure on Ceylon in 1957 negotiations for renewal of the agreement.

As the London *Economist* commented at the time, Ceylon risked losing this credit balance if it rejected China's demand, put forward in the negotiations, that Ceylon favour Chinese goods at the expense of its other trading partners, while on the other hand acceptance of the demand could only mean increased vulnerability to Chinese pressure in the future.

Price-cutting by Communist China in order to drive out competition and gain control of a foreign export market has been evident in other free Asian countries besides Ceylon. In fact, it is a fairly general phenomenon in China's trade with these countries, and represents one of the chief complaints of traders in south-east Asia against Chinese Communist trading practices. In Indonesia, for example, price-cutting contributed substantially to the expansion of Chinese Communist imports into that country—at Japan's expense in respect of manufactured goods, and at Burma's in respect of rice.

Nor is exaggerated price-cutting the only weapon in Communist China's economic warfare arsenal. The devices of 'package deals' and bulk contracts, for instance, served China in good stead in its drive to force Indian textile goods out of the Indonesian market. As already noted in connection with the 1957 Sino-Ceylonese barter agreement, Peking often tries to exploit a favourable bargaining situation to extract blanket guarantees of special treatment for Chinese imports. Still other practices of a monopolistic character have been resorted to in Hong Kong, whose geographical position and large Chinese population facilitate Chinese Communist efforts to dominate the local market for certain commodities. For instance, Hong Kong retailers wishing to handle Chinese eggs are required to join a federation whose members are forbidden to sell eggs from other countries. According to a report by the Japan Export Trade Promotion Agency, there have also been Chinese Communist attempts to impose monthly sales quotas on Hong Kong firms acting as agents for Chinese products.

While the methods described above have been effective in some instances, Communist China is, of course, still far from dominating the overall import market of any free Asian country, and as of now the possibility of its achieving such an aim is still somewhat remote, except perhaps in the special case of Hong Kong. In fact, the recent tendencies of some free Asian countries toward restricting their trade with Communist China suggests that the ruthlessness with which the latter has applied economic warfare tactics (of the short-term variety) has boomeranged to the detriment of its long-term politico-economic objectives. To

some extent, the desire to remedy this situation underlies Communist China's more recent activities in the area of financial assistance to south-east Asian countries, briefly sketched below.

Though still on a very modest scale, Communist China's extension of outright financial grants or interest-free credits to several free Asian countries in the face of China's own extreme capital-poor condition affords perhaps the clearest example of action which cannot be justified on economic grounds and must therefore be attributed to broader economic warfare objectives. Closer examination of these grants will serve to illustrate the point more clearly.

Four south-east Asian countries—Cambodia, Nepal, Ceylon and Burma—have so far been recipients of financial aid from Communist China. Grants were made to Cambodia and Nepal in 1956, the first amounting to eight hundred million rials to be spread over a four-year period, and the second totalling sixty million Indian rupees over three years. The Cambodian grant was reportedly to be used partly for the purchase of Chinese industrial equipment (for textile mills and cement, paper and plywood factories), and partly for a variety of domestic construction projects (farm irrigation, rural electric power plants, roads, hospitals and schools). The grant to Nepal consisted of one-third cash without conditions attached as to its use, and two-thirds in non-repayable trade credits for the purchase of unspecified types of Chinese machinery. Neither of these grants had any discernible short-term economic justification from the Chinese standpoint and were manifestly calculated to boost Communist China's political prestige and influence in the two countries—and perhaps also to pave the way for later economic penetration.

The Chinese Communist credit granted to Ceylon in 1957, amounting to seventy-five million Ceylonese rupees, belongs in a slightly different category in that immediate economic considerations also played a part, in addition to the value of the move as a political gesture. The 'credit' seems to have been actually tantamount to an outright grant since, according to the best information available, it was interest-free and non-repayable. The ostensible purpose of the grant was to help finance the rehabilitation of Ceylon's rubber plantations, although—as noted earlier—China by this time could again buy rubber on the open market and was no longer so dependent upon Ceylonese rubber supplies. In fact, the major purpose of the credit offer was to induce Ceylon, in conjunction with the negotiations for renewal of the first rice-rubber barter agreement,

to grant general free access for Chinese imports into the Ceylonese market.

Very little information is available concerning the reported extension of a twenty million kyat grant by Communist China to Burma, also in 1957. It is presumably similar to the grants made to Cambodia and Nepal, and very probably is to finance the purchase by Burma of Chinese textile and light manufacturing equipment. The circumstances in which it was extended suggest that one of its chief motivations was Peking's hope of alleviating Burmese antagonism arising out of China's aggressive trade tactics.

III

If Communist China has, for the most part, tried to conceal its political motives behind some sort of disguise, its blatantly open attempt to exploit the lure of trade as a means of pressuring Japan toward political recognition of the Communist regime exposed those motives to full view. Trade between Communist China and Japan was first resumed in 1952 under a non-governmental agreement entered into, on the Japanese side, by several private trading groups. The third such agreement expired in 1957, and Communist China seized upon the negotiations for its renewal as the occasion for putting forward a series of expanded demands ranging from the conclusion of an inter-governmental payments agreement and further relaxation of Japanese export controls to the establishment of a large permanent Chinese Communist trade mission in Japan and the exemption of its members from finger-printing under the Japanese immigration law. Although the Chinese Communist negotiators finally had to back down and a compromise fourth agreement was signed in March 1958, Peking soon thereafter repudiated it on the principal ground that Japan refused to permit the flying of the Chinese Communist flag over the trade mission headquarters in Tokyo.

From the first resumption of unofficial trade contracts between the two countries, Communist China pressed the line that Japan could reap rich benefits from an expansion of trade with the Chinese mainland and that the only obstacle to such expansion lay in Japan's observance of the United Nations embargo against the Chinese Communist regime. As soon, however, as Japan relaxed its trade controls somewhat, Peking shifted its position and began trying to use the lure of increased trade as a means of driving an opening wedge toward diplomatic recognition. When it failed to make any appreciable dent in the

Japanese government's position in the 1957-58 negotiations, it abruptly chose the symbolic issue of the right to fly the flag over the Chinese Communist trade mission as a reason to suspend trade relations.

IV

What conclusions may be drawn, then, from the record of Communist China's overall economic activities affecting free Asia? First of all, the character of these activities, the specific directions they have taken, the methods employed as well as the extreme degree of their application—all combine to make it abundantly clear that what we are witnessing is by no means a normal expansion of Communist China's trade and other economic relations with the free Asian nations, but rather the conscious pursuit of economic warfare in all its forms and with all the long-range political implications of economic imperialism.

As for the effectiveness of the Chinese Communist effort in this area, it would be wrong to place too much stress on the fact that the statistics show China—even where it has been relatively successful—to be still far from achieving the necessary degree of economic dominance over the free Asian countries to permit Peking to enforce political compliance by means of economic pressure. The Chinese effort is, after all, still young, and China's economic capabilities are steadily increasing.

The record does, however, justify one significant conclusion on this score—namely, that Communist China has not thus far been too successful in co-ordinating and reconciling its practice of economic warfare on the short-term and long-term levels. This is to say, it has in many instances employed such aggressive tactics for the immediate purpose of capturing an Asian market that it has antagonized the country concerned and thus rendered more difficult the realization of its broader political objectives. Again, as illustrated most clearly in the case of Japan, it has sought to use economic pressure for the purpose of extracting political concessions prematurely—that is, before gaining a sufficient economic stranglehold to make this possible.

The setbacks that Communist China has suffered because of these mistakes could temporarily weaken its ability to wage economic warfare, but they could also result in a more astute strategy in the future. In any event, it is vital that the underlying aims and methods of Communist China's 'peaceful' economic offensive in free Asia be more fully understood.

Yuan-li Wu

EUTYCHUS

Rosemary Dobson

The first day of the week he spoke to them
In Troas when they met to break their bread,
And preached till midnight. Eutychus afterwards
Could not remember anything he said.

This was an irony not easily faced:
Indeed, he kept it largely unconfessed
That after travelling many days and nights
In dangers often, and by hardships pressed,

To hear the words of Paulus and receive
Some healing comfort for his troubled mind
He could not fix his thoughts, was sorely vexed
By others pushing in the crowd behind,

Till, smarting with discomfiture and grief,
He reached a window not above his height
And climbing on the sill and looking out
Breathed in the soporific airs of night.

To saints who have received the word of God
One lifetime is too short for telling all
The joyful news. And certainly an hour
Did not suffice in Troas for Saint Paul.

His discourse lengthened. Eutychus's head
Sank on his chest (and for his sake we weep)
The saint in words that none who heard forgot
Spoke of Damascus. Eutychus was asleep.

Now they were gathered in an upper room
That rose three lofts above, as it is said,
And from his window Eutychus fell down
And those that took him up pronounced him dead.

Saint Paul went straightway to the youth and held
His body in his arms, and cried to those
Who stood about, 'Be troubled not. For see
His life is in him.' And the young man rose,

His troubled mind at peace, his body healed.
And others there were saved that else were lost.
And in the morning Paul went on afoot
To reach Jerusalem by Pentecost.

I like this story of young Eutychus
For I, like him, am troubled too, and weak,
And may, like him, be too preoccupied
To listen if a saint should come to speak.

And yet, I think, if some event befall
To bring me face to face with holiness
I should not fail to recognize the truth
And spring to life again, like Eutychus.

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FAR AWAY AND LONG AGO

J.K. McCarthy

IT IS over thirty years since the letter arrived, and I remember how impatiently I had awaited it. Signed by the Secretary of the Department of Home and Territories, it notified me of my appointment as a field officer of the New Guinea Administration, and instructed me to report to the Government Secretary on arrival at Rabaul. Rail tickets from Melbourne to Sydney and a steamer ticket to Rabaul were enclosed.

S.S. *Mailutu*, which was to take me to Rabaul, was not hard to find, even on the crowded Sydney waterfront. Although the elderly coal-burner was probably the smallest steamer at Walsh Bay, her black and white checked funnel was blowing dense clouds of black smoke that served as a guide to intending passengers. The final stages of loading were already under way when I boarded her and handed my ticket—rather grandiloquently marked ‘Saloon’ there being only one class on the small vessel—to the purser. A pale, wizened steward showed me below to the cabin. ‘First trip to the islands?’ he asked, and when I admitted it he said, ‘Government, eh?’ I asked him how he knew.

‘When you’ve been on this run as long as I have—and I started in 1915—you know everybody and it’s easy to pick the new ’uns. Now you don’t look like a missionary, and strike me we’ve got no less than seven of the blighters on this trip, and that for a start is unlucky for any ship—anything might happen with a lot of Bible-bangers aboard—and you’re not one of them planters or traders, they’re all in the bar getting full before we start—and I don’t suppose you’re a Member of Parliament—correct?’

‘There’s no doubt about you,’ I said, ‘but what’s this about Members of Parliament?’

‘There’s no less than ten of the blisters travelling,’ he replied and held up his hands opened wide. ‘Ten of ’em and all on free tickets—Chrisamighty!’ He raised his eyes as though in prayer.

The *Mailutu* was built early in the century and it was clear that she had not been designed for a warm climate. Even in the middle of an Australian winter it was stuffy below decks, and in hot weather the ship was a sweat-box. With the exception of two ‘state’ cabins on the boat-deck, all passengers were accommodated below in four-berth cabins. Most of the cabin fans

did not work, so that ventilation was poor. Like all ships engaged in the carrying of copra she was permanently permeated with the smell of that cargo. Fortunately for me I don't mind that rather sweetish odour, but to some people it is sickening. A tiny beetle travels with all copra but not all these bugs land with it when it is unloaded; consequently the ship was heavily infested with these insects. They appeared in everything and were everywhere—in the water, in your clothes and even baked in the bread.

In spite of her size—*Mailutu* was about thirteen hundred tons—there was a saloon and a smoking-room and of course a dining-room. All of these were furnished in an old-fashioned style of red plush upholstery on oak and mahogany. All the lights were duplicated; in case the electric power failed there were second lamps of kerosene hanging in brass gimbals. There were neatly framed notices to passengers everywhere but the most emphatic were those instructing in the use of fresh water. Passengers were enjoined and commanded NOT to waste fresh water and in order to make sure that this order was carried out no fresh water was connected to the cabins. The washstand mirror hid the side of a small tank which held about two gallons and this was filled every morning by the steward. Under no circumstances were these cabin reservoirs filled more often. But few of the passengers used water other than for washing.

To make up for any scarcity of water—and to encourage passengers not to waste it by drinking—the bar was almost continually open. It was very small and always very full. The barman and steward who served there were the hardest worked men on the ship—and rumour had it that they were also the wealthiest. Open from dawn to the early hours of the following morning, the cramped bar and smoking-room showed signs of their constant use: the red plush facings of the chairs and settees were worn bare and black and the stained leather of the tables badly needed replacing. The custom of the bar was informal but a rather strict formality was insisted upon when it came to entering the dining saloon. No matter what the passenger chose to wear on deck or in the bar he must always wear a coat at meals. No slackness was permitted at the dining table—be it for breakfast, lunch or dinner. No matter who or what you were, if you did not wear a coat you did not eat. You could wear what you liked besides the coat—appear in pyjama trousers and a singlet—providing a coat was worn all was well.

Before we sailed there was some argument between the purser and the ten members of parliament when it was discovered that

only four of the M.P.s were allotted the two state rooms. Cries of 'protocol' and 'seniority' were heard, but to no avail. The purser, backed by the captain, refused to be moved in his decision and the unlucky six members had to make do with their cabins below.

There seemed to be a large number of passengers for so small a ship and I asked my friend the steward how many could be carried. 'Just as many as the bloody Company can get on board without sinking the bloody boat,' he replied.

When I returned to the cabin my three cabin mates were there to greet me and introduce themselves. There was Fowler, a thin middle-aged man with brown spots on his face and hands, who was a trader of many years in New Guinea and well-known at Rabaul; Schneider, a government surveyor, returning to the Territory after leave and Piggott, a red-headed man of about thirty, who was going to New Guinea for the first time. Afterwards I learned that Piggott had been appointed to a position similar to mine, although at first he was hesitant to tell me this as he preferred to be known as a barrister. He had studied law after his discharge from the Army in 1918.

Although we were still only passing through Sydney Heads, my cabin companions had lost no time. An empty bottle of whisky lay on the floor and a second had been well opened. Schneider was in the middle of an adventure from his past. He continued while Fowler lay on the top bunk with a glass in his hand and a look of unbelief on his bony face. The square-headed Schneider was an Australian of German descent and I gathered that he had served with the British Army during the war. His story concerned no less a place than Buckingham Palace.

'Snowing like hell'—continued Schneider—'and freezing cold. I was doing my beat outside the blinking stone walls when suddenly a small door opens and—who do you think it was?'

'You're a German liar,' muttered Fowler, who appeared to be drunk.

Schneider ignored him. 'It was King George—yes, King George the Fifth. The King—always friendly to me—says, "Cold outside, Schneider?"' and I says, "Yessir, freezing." The King then says, "What about something to warm you up?" I goes inside the door and the King tells me to sit down and he fetches a bottle of whisky out of a cupboard. We just finished one when a knock comes on the door that led inside to the Palace. It was a lady's voice and she said, "Are you there, George?"'

"Yes, Mary," says the King. "Oh, George,"—says the Queen, for it was 'Er Majesty—"who is that with you?" "It's only Schneider," says the King. "Oh!" says the Queen as she comes in the door, "Good evening, Mr Schneider."

'Of course I get up,' continued Schneider, 'and I throws a salute and picks up me rifle and goes back on guard. Nothing snobbish about the Royal Family. Here's to them—God bless 'em.' He reached for the bottle.

I stayed out of the cabin until 11 p.m. The three were then in deep sleep when I carefully climbed into the remaining top bunk.

I was awakened by the lights being switched on at 3.30 a.m. Fowler stood at the basin lathering himself preparing to shave. He pulled a trade box from under his bunk and I saw that it was completely filled with razors of the cut-throat variety. Apparently they were a consignment he was taking back for trading purposes. There was quite a sea running but Fowler kept a perfect balance. He appeared to be in a hurry as he shaved with swift strokes. He was also not quite sober after yesterday's session but he did not even nick himself with the razor. Schneider woke up and demanded that the lights be switched off.

'How dare you speak to me, you Hun b——,' was Fowler's only acknowledgment of the protest. Schneider prepared to give up his sleep in order to reply. 'Taking back some trade rubbish to rob the poor coons, are you, you thieving old hound,' commenced Schneider, as he saw the box of razors on the floor. 'You damned squarehead! These are the best Bengal razors on the market,' said Fowler, and to show how good they were he cut a few hairs from the head of the still snoring Piggott who lay in the lower bunk. This awoke Piggott who threatened Fowler with charges of assault. The three-sided argument looked to be getting serious and I lay quiet hoping that I would not be noticed.

With the abuse getting more and more bitter, Schneider suddenly drew a revolver from beneath his pillow and threatened to shoot Fowler while the trader calmly cleaned his razor and promised to cut Schneider's throat.

'Shaving at this hour of the night. Put the light out and we'll all go to sleep,' said Schneider. I heartily agreed with him.

'Why you loafing government swine,' said Fowler, 'it's time to get up. The best of the day's gone. Tea!' he suddenly shouted, 'Where's that bloody boy with the tea. Tea!'

Finishing the rest of his dressing he left the cabin and at last the light was switched off. At dawn he was waiting outside

the bar, shaven and immaculate. Nobody but his unfortunate cabin-mates would have guessed that he had been there two hours. A cynical, bad-tempered fellow, he had one virtue. No matter how much he had drunk the night before he was never in bed after 4 o'clock in the morning and this continued for the whole trip.

'Nice goings on,' remarked Alf, the steward, the next morning, 'look what he keeps under his pillow,' and he showed me Schneider's revolver. 'Must be scared of his virginity or something.' The purser took charge of the gun and I wished Alf had found Fowler's razors.

As the *Mailutu* steamed north at a determined ten knots the winter of the south changed to sunny and then hot weather.

The passengers that crowded the bar and scanty deck were a fair cross-section of the white population of New Guinea of the time. Except for the parliamentarians there were no tourists as such on board. Four of the missionaries were bearded Brothers and Fathers of the Catholic Mission; the remainder comprised three Ministers and their wives of the Methodist Mission. The Catholic missionaries were all German, and only one of them could speak English. I first heard pidgin as these Fathers and Brothers chatted to the Australians in that language.

Pidgin was spoken in many of the coastal areas when the first Germans arrived in New Guinea in 1870. It is likely that it was introduced by the first navigators, followed by the traders and blackbirders, the latter recruiting labour for the early Queensland sugar farms. The German government and especially the Catholic Mission had adopted pidgin as the *lingua franca* of the country and pidgin dictionaries were already being compiled by the Mission when the Australians captured the colony in 1914. Written phonetically and spoken as the natives and Germans spoke it, and also the Australians of that time, pidgin was *not* broken English.

Most of the Germans did not speak English, they therefore learned pidgin *as a language*, as indeed it is, if spoken correctly. The language only became debased through the laziness of newcomers, who not bothering to learn it, introduced 'broken English' and then became critical because neither the native people nor the Germans could understand them.

The remainder of the passengers were planters, employees of the New Guinea firms and civil servants returning from leave. There was a solitary commercial traveller, a representative of only two commodities, French champagne and Havana cigars. I was not surprised to learn that his business had a hard time

when, a few years later, the depression hit Australia and the bottom fell out of the copra market in New Guinea. Among the civil servants there was a short, powerfully shouldered man with tremendous forearms tattooed from wrist to elbow. He looked a sailor and in fact had been a diver for many years before he had settled in New Guinea. Here he had risen to the post of Chief Engineer in the Administration. A hearty and jovial soul, he was capable of drinking great quantities of rum without any visible effect except that his red face changed to scarlet and from scarlet to purple. Looking like a good-natured, perspiring Buddha the old chap sat at a bar table all day while he entertained listeners with tales of his past. His highly coloured language was spiced with the most original oaths as his memory freshened with each drink. I was told that this cheerful man had only once been known to become really angry, and his wrath had resulted in an important New Guinea law being introduced.

His professional appointment as Chief Engineer in New Guinea did not prevent him from practising his skill as a diver whenever the opportunity offered and one day he was working six fathoms deep in the Rabaul Harbour examining the piles of a wharf. About half a mile from where he was working a thoughtless person, in search of an easy catch, threw a stick of gelignite into a shoal of fish. The shock of the explosion was magnified by the water and for a few minutes it was thought that the Chief Engineer had been killed or at least seriously injured. But a stream of bubbles announced Jimmy's resurrection from the deep. He shot to the surface and even before he climbed out of the water his language was blistering the glass of his helmet. Soon afterwards the law was changed and explosives were forbidden to be used for fishing within enclosed harbours and rivers. The official explanation for the amendment was that it was designed to preserve fish, but popular opinion had it that it was to preserve Jimmy Thompson, the Chief Engineer.

A week at sea and the passengers had settled down—as people will when they are transferred to a small, compact community. Personal foibles were accepted as a matter of course. Nobody even noticed old Fowler's habit of arising—and shaving—a few hours before the dawn. Every man led his own life. But the coat rule for meals on *Mailutu* remained sternly enforced.

The civil servants and planters began to gather in cliques but both parties combined to entertain and instruct the parliamentarians. The aura of greatness that had at first surrounded these gentlemen was fast disappearing.

At last Australia was left behind and as the ship steamed through the Coral Sea towards our only Papuan port of call, Samarai, in the China Straits, the talk on board was devoted exclusively to New Guinea; its day to day affairs and its problems. To me the very name of the island had the sound of adventure, but not so to most of the passengers on *Mailutu*. They were men returning to a tough country to do a hard job and if they possessed any romantic feelings towards the place they were sternly repressed in their conversation.

What those parliamentarians learnt in New Guinea more than thirty years ago I do not know. In any case it would be largely irrelevant now. For New Guinea has changed from a small appendage which Australia treated with unconcern to a big political problem into which we are pouring millions of money in order to produce—what result? It is not very clear. What I learnt in New Guinea over the years I should like to set down. But I wonder whether it can really be communicated; for it is not just facts, but something that has to be learnt by heart.

J.K. McCarthy

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A.D.Hope

Half of the land, conscious of love and grief,
Half of the sea, cold creatures of the foam,
Mermaids still haunt and sing among the coves.
Sailors, who catch them basking on the reef,
Say they make love like women, and that some
Will die if once deserted by their loves.

Off shore, in deeper water, where the swell
Smokes round their crests, the cliffs of coral plunge
Fathom by fathom to the ocean floor.
There, rooted to the ooze-bed, as they tell,
Strange sister to the polyp and the sponge,
To holothurian and madrepora,

The Labra wallows in her bath of time,
And, drowned in timeless sleep, displays the full
Grace of a goddess risen from the wave.
Small scarlet-crabs with awkward gestures climb
Through the black sea-weed drifting from her skull.
Her ladylegs gape darkly as a cave,

And through the coral clefts a gleam and gloom
Reveal the fronded arch, the pelvic gate;
Spotted and barred, the amorous fish swim in.
But in that hollow, mocking catacomb
Their love-songs echo and reverberate
A senseless clamour and a wordless din.

The love-trap closes on its gullible prey
Despite their sobs, despite their ecstasies.
Brilliant with tropic bands and stripes, they dart
Through a delicious juice which eats away
Their scales and soon dissolves their goggle eyes
And melts the milt-sac and the pulsing heart.

The divers on these coasts have cruel hands;
Their lives are hard; they do not make old bones;
The brutal masters send them down too deep.
But sometimes, as he combs the clefts and sands,
Among the oyster-beds and bearded stones
One comes upon the Labra fast asleep,

And throws away his knife, his bag of pearl,
To take her in his arms and wrench her free.
Their bodies cling together as they rise
Spinning and drifting in the ocean swirl.
The seamen haul them in, and stand to see
The exquisite, fabled creature as she dies.

But while in air they watch her choke and drown,
Enchanted by her beauty, they forget
The body of their comrade at her side,
From whose crushed lungs the bright blood oozing down
Jewel by ruby jewel from the wet
Deck drops and merges in the turquoise tide.



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INDIAN STUDENTS IN FERMENT

Sibnarayan Ray

OF THE many baffling problems besetting India since Independence, that of student indiscipline has come into particularly sharp and ugly prominence in the last two or three months. On 10 December last year Lucknow University had to be closed following rowdy demonstrations by students who charged certain teachers with 'immoral conduct' and the University authorities with maladministration. Three days later the neighbouring university of Allahabad was also closed *sine die*. The situation became so tense that on 16 January the Lucknow district magistrate issued orders prohibiting the assembly of more than five persons in a public place.

On the same day, with the Vice-Chancellor's consent, the provincial armed constabulary moved in and took up positions on the university campus. The students replied by calling a general strike. There were demonstrations in defiance of the magistrate's order leading to violent clashes between the students and the police, and there were persons injured on both sides, and several arrests.

After more than a month and a half of closure the two universities reopened, Allahabad on 29 January, Lucknow on 3 February. On 15 February, after 'a four-hour stormy meeting' the Lucknow Students Union formally resolved to withdraw their two-month-old agitation. Few, however, would find much cause for comfort or reassurance in this. In the first place, none of the issues are settled. Secondly, many student organizations in different parts of the country have repeatedly expressed their determination to resist disciplinary measures. Thirdly, all the extremist political parties, both of the right and the left (especially the Communist Party), remain as dedicated as ever to exploiting frustrated youth. Fourthly, and this is the greatest source of uneasiness, the dramatic events at Lucknow and Allahabad only highlight what has been happening on a larger, if not always as spectacular a scale in nearly every part of the country during the last decade or so.

It has now become an almost common feature of Indian academic life to find a large section of students regularly absenting themselves from their classes, organizing demonstrations or going on strike every now and then against educational authorities to coerce them into all kinds of concessions, tearing up answer

papers in the examination hall on the plea that the questions are too stiff, engaging in acts of vandalism, terrorizing the more serious students, and even sometimes assaulting teachers who dare to disapprove of such conduct. Events of this nature are more common on the undergraduate level, but neither the schools nor the postgraduate departments are immune.

The problem has by now indeed assumed alarming proportions. A special committee, appointed by the University Grants Commission (the highest educational body in the country), is to report on this problem in April this year on the basis of detailed information on specific cases of indiscipline submitted by about one hundred selected institutions. A conference of university vice-chancellors and state education ministers will then consider the report and recommend necessary measures. One can only hope that this 'discipline committee' and the proposed conference shall bring to the study of the problem more understanding and imagination than have been evident so far.

Some of the remedies which have been proposed by persons in high authority are somewhat short-sighted and illiberal. Thus, for example, according to a former Vice-Chancellor, all student unions should be prohibited. Others, including the Union Minister of Culture, maintain that indiscipline could be curbed by burdening the students with heavier syllabi. A third recommendation emanating from the National Service Committee, is to make one year's military training compulsory after the final school examinations. The Education Ministry's Committee on Religious and Moral Education only very recently prescribed the introduction of religious instruction as the surest panacea!

What these worthies fail to recognize is that the problem of student indiscipline, like a number of other problems facing India today, has been created not by any perversity of the persons concerned but by the very acute and inevitable disparity between India's newly developing aspirations and her very inadequate resources, both material and human. It is not by repressing aspirations or by putting them to sleep (for that is really what these recommendations would amount to), but by developing and properly utilizing resources that the disparity may be reduced and with it the sense of frustration, of which indiscipline is only a symptom.

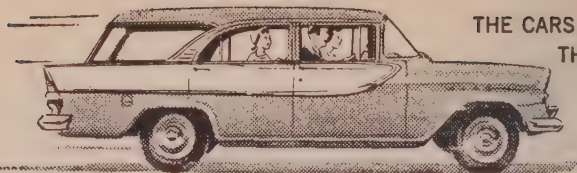
Hindu India had for centuries been based on the caste hierarchy which made knowledge and all intellectual pursuits the monopoly of the Brahmins. Islam added to this closed élite system its own group of priests and religious scholars. The

British introduced India to liberal democratic values, but the colonial system imposed by them made the pursuit of these values well-nigh impossible. Consequently, although the first three modern Indian universities were founded in 1857, when the British left India in 1947 the barely literate in the country constituted less than fifteen per cent of the population. But Western education, though limited to a few, had imbued its beneficiaries with new ideas of human rights and social justice. Under their leadership the newly independent republic committed itself to establishing free and compulsory education for the whole country--at first on the elementary level--by 1965. This was beyond doubt a move in the right direction. But it put a severe strain on the available resources, one for which the leadership was hardly prepared.

Student indiscipline in India, I believe, is a consequence of this strain. Its principal causes are these: There has been a phenomenal increase in the number of students, many of whom come from families or social strata which had for centuries been shut out from intellectual pursuits. To this must be added the over-crowding of schools, colleges and universities which could not keep pace with this development due to lack of teachers, books, buildings, etc. Furthermore, there is a paucity of libraries, hostels, playgrounds, and of opportunities for the students to engage in activities which promote initiative, responsibility and self-expression. In addition we must take into account the submarginal salary scales of the teachers, which drive those more qualified to other relatively more remunerative jobs and which force those who stay on into supplementary occupations. And finally there is a consequent decline in academic standards and growing cynicism among both teachers and students in their attitude to one another and to education itself.

These factors cannot be wished away, nor made to disappear by negative measures. Sustained and concerted efforts are needed by the leaders of the community at every level. At the same time the more developed democratic communities of the West can make a very significant contribution by making their experience and some of their surplus resources available to India in this testing time of her newly acquired values. The indiscipline of Indian youth is born of its newly roused hunger, not merely for bread but also for knowledge and education.

Sibnarayan Ray



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WE ARE MEN—WHAT ARE YOU?

James McAuley

WHEN the Spanish discoverers first appeared amongst the Caribbean islands, the native Indians took them to be visitants from the world of divine beings. Thus in Cuba, as Columbus reported, the Spaniards were greeted by people bearing gifts and 'singing for joy, believing that the people and ships came from heaven'.

Similar things happened on first contact in the Pacific islands. Captain Cook, for instance, was taken by the Sandwich islanders to be a god returning, and divine honours were paid to him. Swathed in red cloth, perched precariously on a rickety scaffolding some twenty feet high, Cook was addressed as Orono and offerings of pigs were made to him.

For Melanesia, the picture has been put together for us by that fine and sympathetic observer Codrington in his book *The Melanesians* (1891):

There are still natives in these islands who remember when a white man was first seen, and what he was taken to be. In the Banks' Islands, for example, the natives believed the world to consist of their own group, with the Torres Islands, the three or four northern New Hebrides, and perhaps Tikopia, round which the ocean spread till it was shut in by the foundations of the sky. The first vessels they remember to have seen were whalers, which they did not believe to come from any country in the world; they were indeed quite sure that they did not, but must have been made out at sea, because they knew that no men in the world had such vessels. In the same way they were sure that the voyagers were not men; if they were they would be black. What were they then? They were ghosts, and being ghosts, of necessity those of men who had lived in the world. When Mr Patteson first landed at Mota, the Mission party having been seen in the previous year at Vanua Lava, there was a division of opinion among the natives; some said that the brothers of Qat had returned, certain supernatural beings of whom stories are told; others maintained that they were ghosts. Mr Patteson retired from the heat and crowd into an empty house, the owner of which had lately died; this settled the question, he was the ghost of the late householder, and knew his home. A very short acquaintance with white visitors shews that they are not ghosts, but certainly does not shew that they are men; the conjecture then is that they are beings of another order, spirits or demons, powerful no doubt, but mischievous. A ghost would be received in a peaceful manner as European visitors have always in the first instance been received; a being not a living man or ghost has wonderful things with him to see and to procure, but he probably brings disease and disaster. To the question why the Santa Cruz people shot at Bishop Patteson's party in 1864, when, as far as can be known, they had not as yet any injuries from white men to avenge, the natives have replied that their elder men said that these strange beings would bring nothing

but harm, and that it was well to drive them away; and as to shooting at them, they were not men, and the arrows could not do them much harm.

The coastal peoples of New Guinea retain, in some cases at least, the memory of what their fathers thought when the white men first appeared. I have myself heard accounts from the people around Madang of the reaction to the appearance of the Russian scientist Miklouho-Maclay. They thought he might be Kilibob, the deity who founded their culture. And by a native of Kopar, at the mouth of the Sepik, I was given an instance of the alternative type of judgment: the white men had been taken to be evil spirits.

The men who have conducted exploratory patrols into the Central Highlands, which were penetrated only in the nineteen-thirties, also came across this strange mode of interpretation. Thus J.L. Taylor records in his report on the exploration of the Purari headwaters:

In some villages I visited in this area we were regarded as people who had returned from the dead, some of the party being actually recognized as ones who had died in recent years. Scenes of great emotion and enthusiasm were witnessed as we passed through the villages, laughing or crying people rushing to caress or kiss or even touch the members of my party. The recognized ones were asked to stay and take their old places in the community.

This of course involved native police and carriers; but it was presence of the white men that set off the misunderstanding.

Certainly it did not take long for the people to realize that the Europeans were in fact living human beings. But even so an aura of the uncanny lingered about them. Where did they come from? Why had they no women? Look, too, at the strange forms of wealth and the supernormal powers they had somehow acquired. And too often their actions inspired fear and distrust. The German observer Parkinson in his *Dreissig Jahre in der Südsee* (1926) remarks that in all his years in the Bismarck Archipelago he found no substantiated case of a white man having been eaten when killed by cannibalistic natives. He believed that the usual reason given by natives when asked, that the white man's flesh did not taste good, was an evasion, and thought that the real reason was that given by an old chief of the Shortland Islands: *Spirit belong all white man no good!* In general, the natives believed that by eating the slain one incorporated in oneself something of his strength. In the case of the white man they may have feared to allow the white man's spirit to gain an influence over them.

It is not to be thought that these original encounters were between mythomaniac savages and clear-eyed Europeans devoid of illusions. Certainly some of the early navigators were realistic enough to see that the savages were just ordinary men and women with the normal spread of vices and virtues, reason and stupidity, though formed in a different culture. Quiros and Cook could not understand everything they saw, and might misinterpret some things, but they did see straight through to the essential humanity of the primitives, and did not systematically misinterpret by applying some false preconception. But from the beginning there were others who did systematically misinterpret; and these ideological distortions split in two opposite directions.

Either the native was the Noble Savage, inhabitant of a primitive paradise uncorrupted by civilization; or he was a subhuman creature whose uncivilized state was due to a brutish inferiority of nature.

The first idea was taken up more enthusiastically by those back home. Thus it was the court humanist Peter Martyr who gave wide currency to the Golden Age version of the life of the Caribbean Indians in writing up the discoveries of Columbus. Translated by Richard Eden into English, his idealization becomes an ingredient in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. This strain of myth-making had its greatest fortune in the eighteenth century when Diderot and other ideologues in Paris acclaimed Bougainville's discovery of the New Cythera, namely, Tahiti. They fabricated a vision of the paradise of Natural Man, having a good start from the enthusiastic accounts of Rousseauistically-inclined members of the expedition, such as Philibert de Com-merson, who told of the delights of innocent sexuality and wrote: 'I can state that it is the only corner of the earth where live men without vices, without prejudices, without wants, without dissensions.' The reservations of the realistic Bougainville were swept aside.

On the other hand, the notion of the natural brutishness and inferiority of the dark savage had more success amongst settlers on the spot, who had to grapple with the inadequacies of the native when faced with European demands, or who wanted a justification for enslaving or exterminating or otherwise mistreating the inhabitants. The Spanish settlers in the New World found it convenient to believe that the Indians were without souls and therefore without personal rights, until rebuked by the Bull of Paul III which affirmed the contrary and forbade the enslavement of the Indians.

The Christian belief in the spiritual equality and brotherhood

of men as *persons*, and the scientific understanding of primitive forms of social and mental life, were slow in breaking through the twin distortions which idealized or debased the savage. Missionaries and scientists themselves fell victim to the prevailing prejudices. Thus the pseudo-theological idea that the black races were subject to the curse laid on Ham's posterity—that they should be hewers of wood and drawers of water forever—an idea born in rabbinical circles and taken over by Dutch Calvinists, also had quite a success amongst Catholic missionaries in Africa in the nineteenth century. And as late as the nineteen-thirties among scientists we find the entomologist Evelyn Cheesman writing as follows of the Papuans amongst whom she had travelled:

I have given offence to missionaries by using such a word, but for far the best attitude to take towards natives is to look upon them all as a superior kind of animal. We are just as responsible for their well-being, and they are just as deserving of kindness and justice at our hands. We can find them every bit as interesting and study them quite as well. . . .

Here also is one of the leaders of thought in France in the twentieth century, Julien Benda:

The humanitarianism which holds in honour the abstract quality of what is human, is the only one which allows us to love *all* men. Obviously, as soon as we look at men in the concrete, we inevitably find that this quality is distributed in different quantities, and we have to say with Renan: 'In reality one is *more or less* a man, *more or less* the son of God . . .' I see no reason why a Papuan should be immortal.'

Had Renan or Benda spoken with the French missionaries who, at the time they were writing, were working amongst the same Papuans, their superficial levity might have been curbed.

So great, then, was the initial 'distance' between the men who encountered one another in different parts of the world in the last few centuries that the first conquest of knowledge had to be an acceptance of the most elementary fact: that they shared a common humanity. Not gods or demons or ghosts on one side; not specimens of Adamic innocence or mere anthropoids on the other: simply men on both sides. Primitive peoples often apply to themselves as a designation the word in their language which means 'men'. Thus when asked by the explorer the name of their tribe, their reply is: 'We are *men*.' But, as we have seen, their reply frequently has another implication. It means also: 'We are men—what are you?' This for both sides has been the first question in anthropology.

Such a simple conquest of knowledge is even now by no means complete, either in theory or in practice.

In practice the human relations that exist in colour-stratified societies, where discrimination is practised on grounds of skin colour, indicate a partial failure of *effective* realization of our common humanity. The black man may not be subject to the curse of Ham; but does he feel any the less under a curse if the very skin he was born with is a permanent disqualification and badge of inferiority?

In theory, things are not satisfactory either. It is not the discredited race theories which we need bother with. The problem lies rather in a defect in our philosophical anthropology—that is, in the general theory of what constitutes the human person, as distinct from the particular inquiries pursued in empirical anthropology. Certain assumptions often present among social scientists tend, far more than they wish to admit, to deprive human oneness of its full meaning. I refer to the 'positivist' or 'scientistic' approach.

The lurking philosophical assumption is that the only kind of knowledge which is truly knowledge is that which can be physically verified by sense-observation. This usually goes hand in hand with the methodological assumption that the social sciences must take the methods of the physical sciences as their model. So we get attempts at creating a 'social physics', at imaging society as a kind of geometry or topology, at dismissing everything from view that cannot be 'quantified' or given statistical form. One result of these linked assumptions is the elimination in principle of what is specifically human: namely, the intellectuality of man, his free will, and his responsibility towards an objective order of moral truths.

In this view there is no such thing as a common humanity. There is no 'human nature', only the immense variety of observable human behaviours. One kind of behaviour has to do with the assertion, implicitly or explicitly, of principles governing social life, of metaphysical beliefs, of what we queasily and slipperily like to call 'values'. But these assertions are all trans-empirical in their content: there is no way of establishing their truth or falsity by purely empirical observation: and so, on a positivist view, the only thing verifiable about them is that they *are* put forward; and the only problem is to *relate* them to the particular social circumstances which are their sufficient cause. For since they have no objective character as possible knowledge, they must be explained wholly as products of the social situation in which they occur.

So we come easily to a position of cultural and moral relativism. Principles, beliefs and values have no possible truth-content;

they are validated only in the sense that they are the demands or conventions that arise in a particular society. But this means that there is no community of mankind with access (however fallible or imperfect) to objective principles of order which can be intellectually recognized and which are valid for all. If we praise or condemn what is done in another society we are merely imposing our socially-determined approvals and disapprovals on a society that happens to have a different set of approvals and disapprovals. There is no common ethical measure between cultures: each constitutes a closed world.

This is not, let it be noted, the tradition in which our Common Law was formed. The basis of that tradition is the belief in a 'natural moral law', pre-existing and superior to, the diverse enactments and conventions of men. When applied to the assertion of governmental authority over peoples of an alien culture this leads (a) to the assertion that there are some basic human rights and principles of conduct which are binding for all social systems and all governments, and (b) to an effort to distinguish between what is merely different and legitimately tolerable in the usages of other peoples and what is intolerable because contrary to natural law. It is this approach which is given expression, for instance, in the legislation of Australian New Guinea, where the *Laws Repeal and Adopting Ordinance* states:

The tribal institutions, customs and usages of the aboriginal natives of the Territory shall not be subject to this Ordinance and shall, subject to the provisions of the Ordinances of the Territory from time to time in force, *be permitted to continue in existence in so far as the same are not repugnant to the general principles of humanity.*

The full consequences of the positivist and relativist approach, with its tendency to break up the reality of human oneness, frequently trouble those who adhere to it. They often fall into an honourable inconsistency rather than accept the logic of their position, speaking and acting *as if* there were after all cognizable moral truths of universal application founded in human nature as such. But others seek to maintain their relativism doggedly against all comers.

The cost of maintaining this position is to substitute for the human person in his fullness a psychophysical simulacrum, methodically deprived of rational dignity. When the primitive accosts such theorists he might well say: 'We are men—what are *you*?' And the theorists might well say: 'We have no human nature in common with you, though we have important observable biological similarities and similar basic needs in respect of food, sex, breathing, micturition etc. . . . We regard

ourselves as socially-determined phenomena and do not pretend to any rational principles of order and conduct; for, as our great teacher Bertrand Russell says, man can exhibit a certain cleverness in choosing means to an end, but ends themselves are not susceptible of rational judgment, being determined by passion and prejudice. We intend by superior power and scientific means to dominate and change your lives, but we claim no rational justification for interfering with you.'

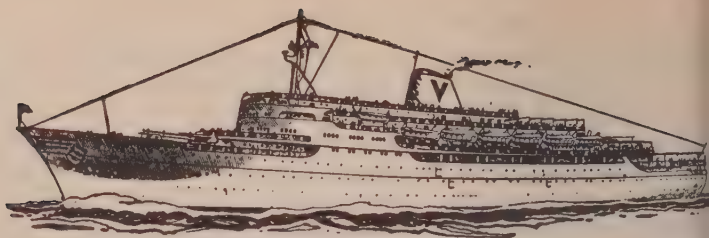
This is, so far, mainly a difficulty in the theoretical domain. But one wonders if it will not accumulate practical effects, as theoretical positions tend to do. Meanwhile signs continually appear that among social scientists there is some realization of the uncomfortable dilemmas into which positivism thrusts its adherents. Thus an American scholar, William L. Kolb, has remarked¹ that a good deal of current thinking takes a direction inimical to social freedom. 'Sociologists,' he notes, 'have believed for some time that in order for a society to exist the members of that society must share a system of values.' Furthermore, it seems that it is necessary for at least most men in that society to believe that these values are objectively *true*, if society is to be satisfactorily maintained. But if the real truth is that none of such values can claim to be 'true', the sociologist is placed in an intolerable dilemma: 'To give all men access to this truth would be to destroy society, for men cannot know to be false what they must believe to be true.' The practical result would seem to be that most men should be denied access to this dangerous truth about the nature of their values. The final illumination must be confined to the initiate. Kolb goes on to indicate a way out of the dilemma:

But perhaps the positivist can forsake his positivism. There is nothing in science that compels one to assert the subjective character of values. . . . When the sociologist restores his belief in the objectivity of values while, at the same time, remaining humble about their final content, he rejoins the human race in its eternal quest.

Whether we are going to see any mass movement towards rejoining the human race amongst social scientists tainted with positivism remains to be seen. It is rather more likely that when the sons of the Melanesian primitives shortly arrive at our universities they will be told by their teachers that only the choice of means can be rational, the choice of ends and principles being necessarily irrational. Let us hope they do not learn this lesson too thoroughly. Nihilism does not invariably take polite academic forms.

James McAuley

¹ 'Values, Positivism and the Functional Theory of Religion', *Social Forces*, May, 1953, pp. 305-311.



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HANS ANDERSEN'S PECULIAR GIFT

A.D.Hope

A NEW translation of Hans Andersen would hardly be worth notice, for so many have already appeared, except for the fact that so few of them have been much good. Because the *Fairy Tales* are supposed to be written for children only—though Andersen himself always denied this—translators and publishers have taken a freedom with his text which they would not have dared to take with Ibsen or Tolstoy for example; though, like Andersen, Ibsen and Tolstoy have suffered enough at the hands of careless and incompetent translators, and of translators who re-translated from French or German. The importance of this new translation by L.W.KINGSLAND (*Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales, A Selection. The World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 10s. 9d.*) is that it is, he says, the first which is accurate. I know no Danish but a comparison with one or two of the best known earlier translations suggests that his claim is just. The volume holds twenty-six of the original hundred and sixty-odd tales. Most of the best known in English are here and one or two not at all familiar.

The *Fairy Tales* of Hans Andersen are something of a curiosity. Some of them are Danish folk tales and some, like 'The Emperor's New Clothes', are what we should call Moral Fables. But the 'curiosity' lies in the fact that they appeared at a time when European Literature was beginning to turn away from the marvellous and the supernatural and that within a few years they had been accepted and had taken their place in the great body of myth and legend which is the basis of the European literary tradition.

Andersen was not always successful. Many of the tales are sentimental, some are pretentious and a few are merely literary imitations of the genuine fairy tale manner. But the best of them have continued to hold their own with the older collections and to demonstrate their superiority to the new and vulgarized fairy tales of this age, the sterile mythology of Science Fiction. This is because they are boldly set in a world of forces which are supernatural, a world in which the natural and the supernatural do not exclude each other but interact in a way which itself seems perfectly natural. This is the essential feature of a fairy tale and Andersen himself erred in calling his autobiography *The Fairy Tale of My Life*. The story of the poor shoemaker's son who became one of the most famous writers of his day is remarkable enough, but it has in itself nothing of that element of the marvellous that would make it a modern fairy tale, no fairies, no witches, no speaking animals or singing nightingales, nothing that re-forms in the mind the sense of other presences and powers than those of everyday life or another logic than that of the laboratory and the market-place.

But this is precisely what the best of the tales is able to do for the child who has read them in the course of growing up. They form part of the general pabulum, the common store of feelings and ideas on which the mind of Western man feeds in childhood and which unconsciously he draws on for his feelings and values in adult life.

You may say that fairy tales are not a very important part of those binding influences and common experiences which we call a culture. What we draw from them and what we retain may seem a trifling matter and quite unlikely to give us a sense of values of any use in dealing with the adult world. But I think that this view is quite wrong. I feel it to be wrong, in the first place, because of my own experience. I remember very clearly as a small boy in

Tasmania, lying in bed and reading for the first time 'The Little Mermaid' and 'The Chinese Nightingale'. Hans Andersen has something for every stage of the developing mind of a child. I already knew stories like 'The Tin Soldier'. They were food for the mind at the age when the magic of the world is conveyed in tales like 'Red Riding Hood' and 'The Three Bears'. In the meantime I had fed on the Brothers Grimm. But at ten or eleven 'The Chinese Nightingale' and 'The Little Mermaid' brought to me for the first time the sense of the poetry of human life, the sense of fate and the sense of man confronting his destiny. For the first time I felt a premonition of that 'deep debate, betwixt damnation and impassioned clay', as Keats calls it, which is the theme and subject of all great literature.

This, I think, marks the position of Hans Andersen among the great masters. He has been compared with Cervantes and with Shakespeare and with Tolstoy. Like them he is a world figure. Like them he is a great artist. But it is wrong to put him on their level. They speak to the adult mind and the soul when it has emerged from tutelage and can stand alone. Hans Andersen is the forerunner. Through him the ripening mind of the child, the half-awakened soul hears the great comic and tragic themes in the form of preludes; it hears them in a form adapted to its immaturity; so that when he comes to the great masters he already knows, in a sense, what they have to say. Because Hans Andersen was himself a great artist, he is prepared by this experience to accept and understand the illumination which is the essence of all esthetic experience: the beauty that illuminates the terror of tragedy and gives another and deeper meaning to the laughter of comedy. The child to whom he speaks already bears in his adolescent soul what Keats has called *The Burden of the Mystery*.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge once raised the question, in discussing his own childhood, whether children should be permitted to read romances of giants and magicians and genii. 'I have,' he said, 'formed *my* faith in the affirmative. I know of no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. . . . Those who are educated through the senses seem to me to want a sense which I possess. . . . The Universe to them is a mass of little things.'

This, it seems to me, is the gift of Hans Andersen to the world and the secret of his genius. In a world which increasingly becomes reduced to a mass of little things, he provides for growing minds that love of the Great and the Whole which is the basis of all poetic insight and all imaginative vision.

Because of this his works pass beyond the boundaries of mere literature. They have become a part of the daily life of the world. 'A book,' says Remy de Gourmont, 'which has been consecrated by the veneration of centuries is no longer a book: it is a portion of nature itself.'

A.D. Hope

THE TIME OF THE EQUIVOCAL MAN

Peter Winton

ALLEN DRURY's best-selling novel *Advise and Consent* (Collins, 26s.) is a hefty book, big in theme and scope and absorbingly interesting to a contemporary reader. The prose does tend to run on a little, in the manner of so many American writers. The characters are perhaps photographic likenesses rather than creations of the order of the great fictional characters; and the exploration of their inner life, while adequate for the story and sympathetically acute,

oes not quite give us the inwardness of living personalities. But having granted these limitations—ones which apply to virtually all novels nowadays, with the exception that some are more sparing of prose—one can hardly raise too highly what the book gives us.

Focussed on the United States Senate, the novel is at once an authentic documentary of American politics and a tense staging of the great debate between 'peace'-mongering illusions and realistic policies for survival. Many of the personages and the critical events of American politics since the war are recognizably here: yet the elements of reality are skilfully re-mixed—no person in the book is simply identifiable as an actual known figure, no situation corresponds precisely with a particular event.

For once, one can say that this is an 'adult' book. Usually this term simply means that the work in question has the moral perceptions of a depraved adolescent or the cynical-sentimental knowingness of a commercial traveller or a junior intellectual. This book is adult because the author, who has been a press correspondent covering the United States Senate for many years, really does understand how strength and weakness, good and evil, decency and vile-ness, are strangely mixed in the complex motivations and behaviour of men in public life. Likeable men sometimes do disgraceful things: under pressure, through passion, in the hope of advantage, and because they do not let themselves see the real quality of their acts or fully intend the sometimes appalling consequences. Unlikeable men have their admirable traits. Men that seemed weak discover strength in themselves when greatness is thrust on them. Men that seemed impregnable go to pieces as events probe their concealed weakness. Good causes are sometimes forwarded by questionable means; bad causes may be supported by men of integrity.

The theme that preoccupies the author is threefold: a desperate uneasiness about the capacity of the great Republic to rise and defeat the deadly challenge to its existence now visibly approaching; a search for the causes of the inner confusion which has put its capacity in doubt; and a fascinated scrutiny of the character of men as they stand or fail under the gigantic pressures of high political life where the game is played 'for keeps'.

Through the thoughts of one of his characters the author reveals his anxiety: Through a combination of lapses, stupidities, over-idealism, and misjudgments, each at the time seemingly sound and justified, each in its moment capable of a rationale that had brought a majority to approve it, the United States had gotten herself into a position *vis-à-vis* the Russians in which the issue was more and more rapidly narrowing down to a choice between fight and die now or compromise and die later. And out of that fearful peril only the most iron-willed and nobly dedicated and supremely unafraid men could lead the nation.'

That is the reason why the crisis which gives structure to the story runs so deep and rouses so much passion. The Senate has to decide whether to advise and consent' to the President's nomination of Robert A. Leffingwell as Secretary of State. Robert A. Leffingwell is the symbol of the forces of wishful thinking, of 'relaxation of tensions' by a piecemeal surrender, of abdication from the role of resolute world leader which the United States must either maintain or perish. Behind Leffingwell stand the forces, formidable when roused, ruthless in their phoney righteousness, of the traders in appeasement, in comfortable evasion, in the illusions of 'peaceful co-existence', in the gilded rhetoric of virtual defeatism. Against this are ranged not only the habitual 'reactionaries' but many moderate men, anxious lest U.S. policy take an irrevocable turn into self-destruction. Of the nominee, one Senator's thoughts are:

'He saw Bob Leffingwell, with all his graceful flirtings with this cause and that over the years, with all his clever skatings along the outskirts of the flabbily-principled and dangerously over-liberal fads of his era, as that perfect symbol of mid-twentieth-century America, the Equivocal Man. . . . He seemed always to slide smoothly just between the sharp edges of clashing principles and find a glib, soft, woozy area of gummy compromise and rationale that effectively blurred everything, enervated all issues, weakened firmness, and sapped resolve in a way that hamstrung his own country and made it easier for her enemies to move a few steps farther along the path they had set themselves.'

The author flouts the convention that the techniques of smear, distortion and blackmail are property of the anti-'liberal' side alone in American politics. In this case the Senator who has become the central figure in the handling of the hearing is hounded down and destroyed when he gets in the way of the Leffingwell nomination.

Drury obviously values above everything else the maintenance of a difficult personal integrity under the strains and temptations of political life. Each participant in the crisis is sifted until events show what he is really worth. It is the old problem. Democratic politics mean compromise. Power cannot be gained without a certain opportunism and accommodation with evils that cannot all be fought at once. But at what point does flexibility become surrender of principle? There are moments when the issues touch bedrock, and a man must say the unequivocal Yes or No whatever the consequences. The Senator being hounded by the pack says to his anxious wife:

"'You've been a politician's wife long enough to know that there comes a time sooner or later for everyone in politics when he just has to stand and take it, that's all. There just isn't any way out, sometimes. . . . Sure I could give in to the President, and to Bob; I could make another statement and close the hearings again and say hurrah for Leffingwell and join the mob and do it the easy way. Would you think better of me for that? I wouldn't think better of myself, I can tell you that.'"

To another Senator, who has been offered the strongest inducement to abandon his position, a shrewd tough old-timer says very memorably:

"'It has been my observation that when a man deserts something he basically and fundamentally believes in, he loses something inside. Yes, sir, he loses something inside. Not," he added ironically, "that I haven't seen it happen many a time in this old Senate. No, sir, not that I haven't seen it happen. But a man pays for it. Yes, sir, he pays. And sometimes," he said softly, "sometimes what he gets for it doesn't quite make up for what he pays for it. Sometimes it truly doesn't.'"

Perhaps it will do no harm to underline the obvious. This book is a good deed by a man of clear and charitable mind which we can read with profit because the substance of politics is no different in Australia, and the real issues are comparable: for Australia, too, it is the politics of survival that really count, and the measure of a man is sometimes the measure of his capacity to stand firm when the issue concerns the basic welfare of his country as well as his personal integrity. There are, one dares say, men in this country in whom the words of the old-timer quoted above are verified.

Peter Winton

...s, Blue Pennant ...
 Tractor Kerosine, Napthenic Oil Marketers
 Gasolines, Motor Spirits, X-100 Motor Oils, Sh
 Fuel Oil, Blue Pennant Household Kerosine, Di
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 Horticultural Flintkote, Colas & Terolas & Hot Bitume
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 Blue Pennant Household Kerosine, Diesel
 or Kerosine, Napthenic Oil, Paraffin Wax,
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The Men Who Rescue Playgrounds

"Hey, look, there's the footer we lost last week!" The man with the mower picked up the damp football and threw it to the excited group of youngsters. "Gee, it's good to have our playground back to play on," piped one happy five-year-old.

AT many church homes, schools and hospitals, the lawns and playgrounds must be left to run wild because there is so much else to tend—and resources are so limited.

In Sydney, however, commercial enterprise has come to the rescue. As soon as the summer peak buying period eases, a group of employees of the Victa motor mower company are given special leave from the factory production line. These men go out with Victa machines to provide a free mowing service where the need is greatest.

Over 330 of these extensive mowing projects have been completed. The tasks range from mowing overgrown lawns to clearing acres of knee-high paspalum and light scrub. Fortunately, although the Victa motor mower is primarily designed for mowing fine grass, it can also make short work of the roughest growth.

The success of the Victa Community Service programme has brought a twofold reward to its sponsors. Firstly, they have had the pleasure of seeing the smiles of grateful children. Secondly, knowledge of the Victa's capabilities has become even more widespread.

In a highly competitive age, the men who rescue playgrounds prove that a progressive company can render practical service to the community, yet still promote its interests in the less altruistic realm of "big business."

EDMUND FULLER:

Man in Modern Fiction

Random House. New York. \$3.50.

In the *Newcastle Morning Herald* recently there was a Franklin Folger cartoon which showed one of his pleasant, middle-aged 'girls' in a bookstore saying, 'I'll be so glad when they start writing books about NICE people again.' Most of us, I suppose, would laugh at this just to show that we are not *The New Yorker's* old lady from Dubuque or Terence Rattigan's Aunt Edna. Mr Fuller's book, which is subtitled 'Some Minority Opinions on Contemporary American Writing', shows us that we ought to think before we laugh.

Mr Fuller's thesis is accurately stated in his Preface: 'I feel that a corrupted and debased image of man has become current and become influential through the persuasiveness and literary skills of some of its projectors'—in contemporary American fiction, that is (plus, for some reason, Moravia). The strategy of his attack may be indicated by some of his chapter-headings. 'The Revival of Total Depravity'—Steinbeck's *East of Eden* and William March's *The Bad Seed* are the particular targets here—in both books evil is explained away by what we may call an amoral Calvinism. 'The New Compassion in the American Novel' snarls most properly at the 'inverted pathos' of 'simple identification with the degraded'. 'The Writer and the Clinic' unfavourably compares writers like Tennessee Williams, Nelson Algren and Paul Bowles with Dostoevsky dealing with similar casebook material. 'The Death of Mrs Grundy' points out a law of diminishing returns operating on the freedom of the writer to say anything. 'The Female Zombies'—his wittiest chapter—has savage fun with the inability of so many of these writers to create genuine female characters. *From Here to Eternity*, with its fantasy glorification of the whore, is only

the most startling example of many. 'The Hipster or the Organization Man?' demolishes the pretensions of the 'beat' writers.

I am in general agreement with Mr Fuller's thesis (though I occasionally disagree with him over details—I think, for example, he is unfair to William March, of whom *The Bad Seed* is not typical). What is depressing is not that these books get written, or even that they get read—but that they are offered and discussed as the current equivalent of Hemingway or even of Faulkner. There is not an author attacked by Mr Fuller who has not been praised by a reputable critic—and this despite the fact, unmentioned by Mr Fuller, that many of their books are badly and boringly written.

Many of these writers, however they may regard themselves and whatever claims some critics may make for them, are in fact the descendants of those familiar figures in the history of American fiction, the naturalists. And yet it is twelve years since Malcolm Cowley pointed out that: 'The effect of naturalism as a doctrine is to subtract from literature the whole notion of human responsibility'; and ten years since Philip Rahv said: 'But to establish the historical credit of naturalism is not to refute the charges that have been brought against it in recent years. For whatever its past accomplishments, it cannot be denied that its present condition is one of utter debility.'

I have two complaints about Mr Fuller's book. Apart from a largely irrelevant attack on Joyce, he ignores literary history, and especially American literary history, almost entirely; and to do this is misleading. It is easier both to comprehend and to evaluate Mailer, Algren, Bowles, and the rest when we see them as the heirs of Dreiser, Norris and Jack London. And Mr Fuller merely attacks the writers. He does not attempt to explain why literate people

should let themselves be deceived into thinking that in reading *From Here to Eternity* or *The Wayward Bus* or *On the Road* they are reading Literature.

Mr Fuller says at the end of his book: 'Whether we are Jews, or Christians, or of any other persuasion; whether we profess any religion or not, we have a need and an obligation to reappraise and re-focus our vision of ourselves and our species in terms of the great tradition of man which has shaped the constructive history of our Western world, and of which we are all co-inheritors. We need to make this reappraisal in our lives and we need to make it in our literature and other arts, and in our sciences.' Because I believe this, I think Mr Fuller's book needed writing. It should certainly be read by anyone interested in contemporary American fiction.

T.H. Jones

BROTHER RONALD FOGARTY,
FMS:

Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950. Vols. 1 & 2.

Melbourne University Press. 100s. od.

This is historical work on the grand scale. It gives evidence of that patience and thoroughness in research, that urge for completeness which are necessary in the master-historian. Its scholarly apparatus will be humbling to both the general reader and the professional historian. Brother Ronald has consciously chosen the historical way of treating his subject and that is, after all, the hardest way. He is handling not a polished set of principles consciously applied to an unchanging situation but the 'conflicting forces' of Australian nineteenth and twentieth century history, all the loose ends and obscure episodes inevitable in every human story.

In this mature work there is none of that dark romanticism which surrounded the Catholic histori-

ography of an earlier generation and which is very well known, for example, to students of the history of the sixteenth century. It would be wrong to say that the story is without heroes (why, after all, should it be?) but an attempt is made to understand all, whether past Catholic mythology has cast them as villains or heroes, in the conditions of their own time. The references to Sir Henry Parkes are cool and fair-minded. Indeed, to none of the statesmen responsible for the Education Acts of the late nineteenth century would Fogarty attribute a hatred of, or contempt for, religion. On the other side, Archbishop Vaughan was admittedly 'overwrought' in 1879, although he had reason.

The argument of the work, if one can dare to summarize, is this. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Catholics took part in a system whereby the State subsidized denominational schools. As time went on, the State grew cool towards these schools and its surveillance of them became more rigorous. It must be admitted that the schools themselves were weak, carrying out badly even the religious instruction for which ostensibly they existed. The main reason for their fall, however, was that the very idea of denominational education was falling into disfavour. Religious indifference was spreading. Many Protestants joined the liberal critics of the denominational principle; those who did not were not determined enough in defending it. Thus the old State-supported system was heading by the seventies for an unavoidable crisis.

For a long time, Catholics had clung to the old system. Already in the sixties, however, the bishops began, in the face of the system's difficulties, to take a more independent stand, and were strengthened by anti-liberal pronouncements by the Church overseas. There was a perceptible movement of the tide towards

the idea of a distinctive and independent Catholic education. When the crisis came with the Education acts of the seventies and eighties, the response of the Church was to create an independent system of schools staffed by religious. This system has had a vigorous and characteristic life of its own, but as well, in the twentieth century, it has been in close relation with the national system.

It must be for experts in the history of Australian education to weigh the validity of these arguments. What I would like to do is to reflect on one or two aspects of this story and above all on the roles of the three main actors: liberalism, Protestantism and Catholicism. The widening gap between Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards Church education is essential to Fogarty's argument. He explains it by the debilitating influence of liberalism on the Protestants. Another explanation, however, might suggest itself. Because of their insistence on the supernatural experience of 'conversion', evangelical Protestants, who were very far from being 'liberals', would simply not consider the schoolroom as important as Catholics did. Their attitude was doubtless too individualistic and pietistic, but it was not necessarily weakness in the face of secularism.

The influence of liberalism on Protestant thought in the nineteenth century is, of course, undeniable. But the prophecy of Newman, which Fogarty seems guardedly to accept, 'that the inevitable issue of the reformed principles would be Unitarianism, or the absolute rejection of the supernatural' has been utterly belied by subsequent developments. The Protestant hold on the Bible has proved much stronger than Newman could have foreseen and, after the astringencies of liberal theology, there has been a revival of Biblical theology and of the pristine reformed principles which is as important as the Thomist revival in the Catholic Church. What this suggests is that

Newman's prophecies are ultimately not helpful for understanding what was going on and should be treated as cautiously as those of Marx in another field.

The absurdities of nineteenth century liberalism are plain enough. In Tasmanian school readers, for example: 'Longfellow's poem "Psalm of Life" was minus a verse—because a line in that verse contained a reference to God.' This would be laughable if one did not still encounter the assumption that a true education is one in which the claims of religion are not only not considered but not even put. The weaknesses of the non-denominational teaching which Protestants sometimes favoured are also very plain. It was a lowest common denominator and lacked in both religious and intellectual content. To overlook the dilemmas created by a heritage of religious conflict, for which all must share blame, would, however, be unfair. For all their inadequacy, these schemes expressed at times a genuinely ecumenical impulse.

The achievement of the Catholic Church in Australia is unique and amazing. Out of its own resources it created a great system of schools. Indeed Fogarty believes that, in its grasp of the principles involved, it anticipated the Church elsewhere.

Does a paradox remain—in the fact that a system founded to have religion penetrate the teaching of every subject has adopted more and more the syllabuses and examinations of the State system it rejected? Perhaps the intellectual problems of penetrating the teaching of secular subjects with religious faith were greatly underestimated. Fogarty recognizes that Catholics 'seem to have been far better equipped to adopt negative and protective measures against error and anti-Catholic prejudice than they have been to appreciate the positive riches of their own faith.' He attributes this to the inferior position of the

Irish in Australia. Is not another explanation suggested by Vaughan's refusal to send religious teachers to public schools and to take part 'in the jar of tongues and the contradiction of creeds which is abhorrent from all our instincts of reverence and religion'? Is not there the whole tragedy of the nineteenth century Church, its preference for withdrawal over going out and mixing it in free debate? Is it possible that, because of this, Catholicism in Australia has been more effective as a political force than as the civilizer which Vaughan himself so nobly expected it to be?

Bruce E. Mansfield

W. B. YEATS:

Mythologies

Macmillan. London. 34s. 9d.

W.B. Yeats is the sort of great writer whose prose works throw a good deal of light on at least the margins of his poetic world. They are, for one thing, so explicitly ideological, so persistently determined to explain and demonstrate his beliefs. And they are so 'poetic' in their make-up: so full of symbols and emblems, so rich in dramatically presented incident, and so preoccupied with the stance of their author. In a way, they constitute a body of quasi-poetry alternative to his poetry itself.

Of all of them, *Autobiographies* rather than *A Vision* seems to me to be the indispensable commentary on his creative work: indispensable because it is not concerned merely with the jerry-building of a personal mythology but also with dramatic revelation of character—including his own. In it Yeats shows himself as among other things a fine (though distinctly odd) journalist.

Mythologies is a new collection of certain books which had previously remained separate. Four of the five constituent volumes are the product of the Yeats of the Yellow Nineties, when he was capable of treating the

Celtic world only as a twilight land, a land of fairies. This was a disastrous misreading of the character of that world, but it seems at the time to have fulfilled some need of its author's. In one way, the little fey stories and episodes published under the titles of *The Celtic Twilight* and *The Secret Rose* reproduce the legends which were treated in other terms in his early poetry, and so provide sources. In another way, they provide a treatment of legendary material alternative to the treatment it received in the poetry.

Anyone who loves Yeats's poetry will probably read these stories with curiosity rather than delight. But his response to the *Stories of Red Hanrahan* and *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* is likely to be richer. The picaresque figure of Hanrahan, after all, haunted Yeats in his later creative life. In 'The Tower', for example, he becomes an anarchist persona set wandering in a preternatural world as a focus for its energies, a figure through whom Yeats can test the relation between appearance and reality. And *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* is his first attempt at a systematic statement of certain ideas which he was later to express more elaborately and eccentrically in *A Vision*. They are, generally, ideas about the dramatic use of personality and about its relation to a hidden or numinous world.

This is, then, a most interesting volume, and we must be grateful for it. It would be interesting even if it did no more than encourage the reflection that, without the poetry and its greatness, much of Yeats's prose presents the spectacle of a man trying to construct a religion out of his own sensibility and calling it tradition, seeking to satisfy a profound religious need with an eccentric system of abstractions and a fandel of little stories. *Mythologies*, yes; in more senses than one. Without the poetry, this religion becomes sentimentality. *Within* the poetry, it

becomes a burning sense of the drama of human life in a world of fact which is also a numinous pattern.

Vincent Buckley

MANNING CLARK:

Meeting Soviet Man

Angus & Robertson. Sydney. 15s. od.

This book functions at three levels. It is first of all a record of a brief visit to the Soviet Union as a member of a Fellowship of Australian Writers delegation. The members had the usual round of sightseeing and the usual conversations with functionaries of one kind and another. While one appreciates the vivid interest the author naturally found in even these brief superficial contacts with a society which has been at the centre of world attention, there is nothing new or interesting for the reader.

The second level is the projection of the author's own subjective impressions and interpretations on these brief contacts. The impressions are wildly uncontrolled and unverifiable, unless one credits him with a preternatural power of instant clairvoyance into the hearts and minds of great numbers of people with whom he has exchanged a word or two, or not even a word. The interpretations spring from a meeting of the author's preconceptions with these subjective impressions. They are also vitiated by a curious ambiguity in the term *Soviet Man*, of whom various things good and bad are predicated. Sometimes *Soviet Man* appears as the actual Russian people, sometimes as the official image of the people, sometimes as the Soviet Government and the Communist Party. Thus early in the book he speaks slightly of the propaganda 'designed to persuade or browbeat people into believing that Soviet Man was a monster, indifferent to human life, prepared to lie, cheat, steal or kill

to achieve an end vaguely defined as world domination'. Now, I know of no propaganda of wide currency that says this of the people of Russia. On the other hand, if one reads the history of Soviet Communism together with the official texts explaining Leninist aims and tactics, this is a quite exact description of the ruling machine; except that there is nothing vague about the aim of world domination: it is simply the further extension of what has happened in Eastern Europe, China, North Korea, North Vietnam and Tibet.

At the third level there is something else, which is worth taking more seriously. Manning Clark has a real feeling for the Russian people, and does not want them to be lost sight of in the ideological and political battle. He also has a real feeling for the spiritual and artistic wealth of the cultural achievements of the great period of development since Pushkin. He doubts whether this magnificent cultural creativity has survived or could survive under the Soviet system, even though education and state publishing etc. have increased the popular *consumption* of past achievements. He has a feeling also for the immense drama of the Revolution, the magnitude of the issues involved, the greatness of the hopes. He sees that it represents the paroxysmic effort of the forces of the Enlightenment to establish the secular reign of peace and brotherhood and freedom from exploitation, and is impatient with those who cannot sense the grandeur of the event. He would, I think, agree with the remark of Lenin's wife: 'Those who have not lived through the revolution cannot imagine its grand and solemn beauty.' And he would also agree with Whitaker Chambers's comment on this (if with little else): 'the West will have to match that resonance from some depths within itself.'

There is plainly an unresolved

tension in the author's mind between the pull of the image of secular totalitarian perfection and the perspectives of a religious view of life. This inner debate is but poorly represented in this book, but that is not to say that the author could not do it greater justice in another sort of book. One would hope, however, that if he does so, he will go beyond the setting up of certain straw men and simplified stereotypes. I shall mention two examples. In several places he seems to lump together all the seriously critical commentators on the Soviet regime in such terms as 'the professional Red-baiters, the intellectuals who have sold their talents to serve the interests of Mammon'. He would be well advised to come to grips with the fact that there is a body of critical literature written by men of scholarship, experience and integrity whom he has no right gratuitously to insult with these shoddy clichés. On the assumption that 'McCarthyist' methods are the property of 'reaction' too many liberals give themselves a liberty in smear techniques which should disturb their consciences.

Again, in defining the alternatives in the great debate between the armed prophecy of the Enlightenment and the Christian outlook, he characterizes the second as essentially 'pessimistic', leading to complete despair of politics as unable to make any contribution to human happiness. This may be true of certain strains of Lutheran or Manichean thinking. It cannot stand for Christianity in general, within which there are many different currents of social and political thought and striving, which together make up a broad tradition whose fruitfulness in social welfare and progress in an imperfect world the author is quite capable of appreciating if he could allow himself to abandon the emotional clichés that disenchanted left-liberals finger like charms against the Evil Eye.

James McAuley

GEOFFREY DUTTON:

Founder of a City—the Life of Colonel William Light

Cheshire. Melbourne. 42s. 0d.

If one may judge from reports the holding of the first Adelaide Festival of Arts in 1960 is going to have many claims to fame; one that might pass overlooked is the contemporaneous publication of a new biography of William Light, South Australia's first Surveyor-General, who chose the site of Adelaide, and (like Hoddle in Melbourne) in 1837 planned and laid out the city in a manner which his shortsighted successors were unfortunately unable to imitate as the suburbs grew during the century that followed.

Mr Dutton justly laments the loss of many of the family papers, whether in the accidental fire in Light's hut on the eve of his death, or in the more deliberate destruction by some of his puritanical descendants anxious to hide the traces of illegitimacy in the family tree; likewise in Egypt he found politeness but non-co-operation in his search for material dealing with Light's service with Mehemet Ali, founder of the dynasty whose rule ended with Farouk, and who is therefore *persona non grata* with today's authorities. But despite these losses and occasional gaps in the story, we feel that we have learned something of the character of the man as it emerges during his career before he became famous in South Australia. We read of his financial trials, his easy-going attitude towards both his father's executors and his wife, of his service in the Royal Navy (1799-1802), and later in the army in the Peninsular War, scene of the early careers of so many early Australian notabilities, of his quixotic assistance to the Spanish liberals in 1823 and his long travels in Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean. Active and energetic, neither his means (he does not appear to have received the £20,000 from either the East India Company or Jardine Mathieson &

Co. as is often asserted—most recently in the *Australian Encyclopædia*) nor his temperament allowed him to remain long unemployed. We can foresee from his career that in the never-ceasing petty quarrels that accompanied the foundation of South Australia, he would be neither idle nor self-seeking, but thoroughly competent and painstaking in giving devoted service to the infant colony.

Of the quarrels that beset the first two years of that settlement Mr Dutton paints a vivid picture—even if one feels he may be a little severe in dismissing Governor Hindmarsh as a fool, irritating and autocratic as he undoubtedly was; this is a story which needed forceful telling, since Mr Pike, in his otherwise excellent history, *Paradise of Dissent*, has rather slurred over the Hindmarsh regime; but of even more interest than the never ceasing wrangling of self-important, shortsighted self-seekers, is the account of the unceasing hardships of the pioneers of any settlement. Too often forgotten is the lack of proper food and shelter as well as of comforts of every kind, not to mention the complete lack of transport of every kind, even horses and handcarts—though whether Light's difficulties in these matters would reconcile him to the recent tree-destruction in the interests of road-making near the city is another matter.

Despite all difficulties, and despite opposition from the Governor and others, Light was able to make remarkable progress in surveying one hundred and fifty thousand acres and staking one hundred and fifty sections in fifteen months; but when his requests for more staff met with refusals, reprimands and orders from London to undertake a 'running' instead of a 'trigonometrical' survey, Light had had enough. 'My disgust and hatred now of all that has transpired makes me sick of serving and I hope soon to be my own master,' he wrote in May 1838. Unfortunately

his health by then was broken and in October of the next year he died.

To Light South Australians owe the present site of their capital, when he firmly resisted entreaties and pressure to place it near the impassable sandbar at the mouth of the Murray, as well as the dignity of its plan; to Mr Dutton we are indebted for an excellent addition to the list, fortunately now rapidly growing, of learned, sympathetic but not hagiographical studies of the pioneers of Australian settlement.

A.G.L. Shaw

V. L. BORIN:

The Uprooted Survive

Heinemann. London. 20s. od.

One hundred and thirty years ago, an exiled English journalist wrote what might be called the first Australian novel.

Now, Vladimir Borin, a journalist from Czechoslovakia, who came to Australia in 1951, has written the first novel of the 'new Australians'—the post-war migrants to this country. Mr Borin's book parallels in many ways the earliest Australian fiction. Though more compact than the sprawling three volume novels of the last century, it deals with similar themes.

Many novels of the early settlers were deliberately didactic; they set out to instruct or to protest. Some described conditions in the colony; others, looking back to Europe, denounced the system which had forced unwilling exiles to come to Australia. A few were concerned with the problems of the uprooted, struggling to accept and to be accepted, and above all to survive.

Like these pioneer novels, *The Uprooted Survive* is semi-documentary, and like them it may have historical importance beyond its own merits. As a novel, it suffers from the fact that its author has too much to say. Mr Borin has taken a dozen people from Central and Eastern Europe and traced the events which brought them

together in a camp for displaced persons in 1945. The Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, and its 'liberation' by Russian armies, the activities of the partisans and the growth of the Czech Communist Party, are all compressed into a few chapters. It is not surprising therefore that the author has no room to develop his characters fully.

In the second part of the book, which describes the arrival of the migrants in Australia, there is a good deal of shrewd observation. But again Mr Borin tries to cover too much ground. We are taken from the camp at Bonegilla to a Victorian Railways workshop at Newport, then to a Tasmanian timber camp, a factory and a King's Cross restaurant.

A few of the migrants settle easily into Australian life. Stan and Opal, at home wherever a black market flourishes, found an efficient housing swindle in Melbourne. In the last chapter, their consciences rather improbably aroused, they turn to good works among their fellow migrants. But there are others, like Natasha, who refuses to learn English, and whose children will not speak to her in Russian. Mr Borin sees the only end for her isolation in despair and suicide.

The author's own viewpoint is probably summed up by Blaha, who gives his friends this advice: 'You cannot forget your past, but don't isolate yourselves in it. Help to preserve freedom in the country in which you are free. You cannot liberate Czechs, Poles or anybody in Europe . . . but you can fight for freedom in Australia.'

If the narrative of *The Uprooted Survivors* seems to be overloaded with the author's comments and reflections on Australian life, it must be admitted that he has some sensible things to say. We may hope for other novels from the 'new Australians' in which the same themes will be explored.

Brenda Niall

NAN McDONALD:

The Lighthouse, and Other Poems

Angus & Robertson. Sydney. 16s. od.

The poetry of Nan McDonald presents us with a forbidding world. She is obsessed with the destructive forces of nature: in her long, loping stanzas, winds beat on rugged coasts, carrion birds or bush fires denude the bush and kill its creatures, and man is alone, forced into himself and finding solace only in his relationship with God. Her long verse dialogue, 'The Lighthouse', has a typical theme: an aged lighthouse keeper, grimly austere in his attitude to human love, is haunted by ghostly voices which mock him and torment him through silence and storm. In the lonely lighthouse, like the hero of Robert Ardrey's play *Thunder Rock*, he suffers as the spirits of the departed throng about him.

Blaming himself for his mate's death (he often had hated the man for his conceit, for his preening of himself as though for some woman's benefit) Peter, the lighthouse keeper, seems to have reached the final stage of pessimism when his predecessor John returns from the past to remind him of God's love. The poem ends with Peter's understanding of his proper role in life.

The dialogue is handled with considerable skill, informed by the sternest moral principles—yet somehow it fails to impress one as a work of art. The whole structure, though sturdy, appears to be supported on rather threadbare poetic ideas—the language simply isn't sharp enough, the imagery rather dated and flat. One is respectful, one admires the energy, the tormented, Emily Brontëish vision, but one is not moved. And that, in a poem concerned with the plight of an old man, washed up by the tides of the world, is a serious fault.

The other poems in the collection are at once shorter and more pleasing. Nan McDonald gets the 'feel' of the bush, and her evocation

'The Hatters' is admirably done. But even here the temptation is to think of her vision as that of a lighthouse itself: a clear, stabbing light from a stony source, probing into the storms of the world.

Charles Higham

MORRIS WEST:

The Devil's Advocate

Heinemann, London, 20s. 0d.

The Devil's Advocate, the latest book produced by the Australian author, Morris West, is an extremely interesting piece of work though not, I think, a completely successful novel. Its imperfections, however (which are interesting enough in their own right) in no way detract from its readability, nor from the intrinsic fascination of the story Mr West tells so skilfully. His account of the preliminary official investigations made by the Church into the life and death of a prospective candidate for beatification is as exciting and intriguing as a good detective story. The action takes place in the poverty-stricken, disease-ridden and superstitious society of Southern Italy, a part of the world which Mr West knows well; and his rendering of the people and the land they live in, together with his intelligent and unsentimental analysis of the Italian political situation, constitute a most sensitive and convincing piece of writing. Similarly satisfying is his account—ironical, detached, but sympathetic—of the workings of that vast ecclesiastical bureaucracy, the Catholic Church. As one of the characters, Cardinal Marotta, observes, the Church 'is a career, a profession. . . . It's a pious legend that priesthood sanctifies a man or that celibacy enobles him. . . . Often it's harder for us to save our souls than it is for others.' Mr West's portraits of professional clerics are amongst the best things in the book; in particular his presentation of the

Devil's Advocate himself, Monsignor Blaise Meredith, stands out as a triumph of characterization. In choosing this man for his central figure, the writer set himself a difficult task, for when the novel opens Meredith knows that he is soon to die a particularly painful death from cancer. It is a mark of Mr West's ability that he should be able to present such a character so successfully. Equally impressive is the portrait of Dr Meyer, the Jewish liberal who, like Carlo Levi, the author of *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, was exiled to Calabria by the Fascist government. For the most part Meyer and Meredith balance each other naturally and easily—although one cannot help feeling that Mr West allows Meyer to be defeated too easily. As *Christ Stopped at Eboli* demonstrates, the Calabrian peasantry are not so superstitious as to be completely blind to the solid advantages of scientific medical treatment. Nonetheless, although Meyer is, figuratively speaking, knocked over by the environment and, in a sense, by Meredith, he is no mere man of straw; and the discussions between the disillusioned sceptic and the dying priest form some of the best parts of the novel.

Yet *The Devil's Advocate* cannot be called a complete success. Its most damagingly weak feature is the characterization of the dead man, Giacomo Nerone, the putative saint, round whom the action revolves. He never emerges as a real figure—although it must be admitted that Mr West makes his impact on the other characters seem credible. Equally unfortunate is the artificial and awkwardly symbolic structure of the novel. The suicide of Nicholas Black is stagey in the extreme, and from the obscure and diffident way in which Mr West informs us that he is Nerone's twin brother, it is clear that the whole notion (together with the heavily significant naming of the two villages—Gemello Maiore

and Gemello Minore) has become something of an embarrassment to him.

The Devil's Advocate affords a most interesting example of what can go wrong in a religious novel. Characterization is not a basic difficulty: all but the most stupid of sceptics is prepared to admit that religious emotions can be genuine. But once a writer tries to make the action of his novel carry an overtly religious significance—in particular, if he attempts to represent through it what purports to be the direct intervention of God in the affairs of men—then he can easily find himself in real trouble. The sceptical reader is liable to feel that he (together with most other right-thinking people) is being got at unfairly, and will quite possibly reject the story out of hand as impossible; while even readers who are more sympathetic are liable to wonder whether God, if he does exist, is likely to act in just the way the author suggests he might (one might like to think, for instance, that he would not be quite so melodramatic as he is made to appear in

The Devil's Advocate). The most effective and convincing religious novels, it seems to me, are often those in which, in some sense at least, God does not appear, and in which his existence, or the question of whether he exists or not, is largely irrelevant. The tragedy of Scobie, in *The Heart of the Matter*, for instance, is the tragedy of a man trapped, like Oedipus or like Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon*, by his own sense of honesty and logic, and by the sincerity of his convictions. From the literary point of view the metaphysical validity of what these different heroes believe in is not really important. It is the validity as characters that matter.

In *The Devil's Advocate* Mr Weems seems to be most successful where he is least overtly religious—and at this level he is at times very successful indeed. Whatever its weaknesses, the book is an intelligent and accomplished piece of work, and a most refreshing example of the confidence with which an Australian author can handle a group of characters and a situation far removed from his native society.

R.F.Brissenden

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

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DAVID MARTIN was born in Budapest and educated in Germany. Before coming to Australia he published several books in England. His *Collected Poems* was published in 1958 and a story-poem, *Spiegel the Cat*, will shortly be published by Cheshire.

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